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Citation style: Wysocka Marzena S. (2007). Stages of fossilization in advanced learners and user of English : a longitudinal diagnostic study. T. 1. Praca doktorska. Katowice : Uniwersytet Śląski

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MARZENA S. WYSOCKA

**Stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users
of English: a longitudinal diagnostic study**

VOLUME I

*A dissertation presented to the Faculty of
Philology, University of Silesia, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Humanities in the
subject of Applied Linguistics*

Supervisor:

Prof. dr hab. Maria Wysocka

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA

2007

MARZENA S. WYSOCKA

**Stadia fosylizacji u uczących się i użytkowników
języka angielskiego na poziomie zaawansowanym:
diagnoza podłużna**

TOM I

Praca doktorska pod kierunkiem:

Prof. dr hab. Marii Wysockiej

UNIWERSYTET ŚLĄSKI

2007

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INTRODUCTION

“Language is lived on levels and arrived at in stages”

E.L. Cole

The process of language learning was looked at from the perspective of stages by Selinker (1974: 35). It was in 1972 that he introduced the concept of *interlanguage* conceived of as a language system that “has a structurally intermediate status between the native and target languages”, and, consequently, stages of its development. Both observations Selinker (1974: 36) made with respect to SLA, and his conclusive remarks concerning the situation in which a large proportion of second language learners do not achieve native-speaker competence gave rise to the notion of *fossilization* most often defined as a cessation of interlanguage learning.

Viewed that way, the phenomenon of fossilization is identified with a given stage of development at which the language learners/users produce such linguistic forms which deviate from the TL norm, and are not developing any further, or rely on such deviant features of the second language which were thought to be eradicated in their language performance a long time ago. The fact that the second language learners do not progress any longer or revert to their earlier stages of acquisition implies that not only the (inter)language, but also language fossilization lives on levels and is arrived at in stages.

Thus, the aim of this work is to distinguish the stages of fossilization, and provide a description of distinctive features each stage is marked by. Also, the author of the project in question intends to find the characteristics the stages have in common, as well as the language levels and dimensions at which they differ. Last but not least, learning and teaching implications are provided, each aimed at sensitising the language learners/users to the problem of fossilization, and developing their language awareness at the same time.

Chapter I provides an insight into the phenomenon of fossilization as such. Starting with the theories explaining the nature of the process in question, the

approaches and attempts to define and characterise it are discussed. What follows is a description of the scope and manifestations of fossilization, an emphasis being made on the quality of language competence the Polish learners/users of English represent.

In Chapter II, fossilization is placed in the context of language development. Given the role and function it plays along the IL continuum, the effects the phenomenon in focus has on the language learning and use are remarked on. Finally, on the basis of relations fossilization develops with a variety of language aspects, its facets are clearly identified.

Chapter III constitutes a scheme of a longitudinal diagnostic study designed to identify the stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English. Having presented the aim of the project, and research questions, sample description is provided, as well as instrumentation and procedures adopted are enumerated.

Chapter IV presents the study results deriving from the questionnaire implemented in the group examined. Important as background information is to the research in focus, much of the onus falls on subjects' learning and teaching experiences, including evaluation of their learning outcomes, the language itself, and language tasks they approach. Apart from the above-mentioned, the sample is looked at from the perspective of mistakes and language problems, areas of language failure and achievement, exposure to input and fossilization.

All the information gathered is verified in Chapter V devoted to the analysis and discussion of findings obtained in the course of the three measurements, each aimed at investigating the subjects' spoken and written language competence. Based on the actual language production, being the students' reactions to the topic in speaking and writing respectively, a classification of oral and written symptoms of fossilization is offered, as well as the reasons for the status quo are suggested.

Chapter VI draws a distinction between the three stages of fossilization, both with respect to the scope and incidence of oral and written fossilization syndromes. Also, language proportions, changes and tendencies observed are illustrated and given attention to.

Chapter VII presents the main research findings of the previous chapters. Aside from a characteristic of the nature of the very stages of fossilization, and fossilization itself, the impact of fossilization on the IL development is reconsidered. Lastly, the solutions to the problem of fossilization are proposed, and suggestions on further studies in the field are put forward.

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF FOSSILIZATION

1. Introduction

Historically speaking, the attempts to define *fossilization* appeared in the literature in 1953 when Weinreich (1953; after Selinker & Lakshmanan 1993: 199) referred to the very term as to a ‘permanent grammatical transfer’. A few years later, in 1961, Nemser (1961) identified fossilization with the formation of permanent intermediate systems and subsystems. However definitive these statements may seem, it must be born in mind that both interpretations were formulated on the occasion of discussions generated on the interplay between language transfer and fossilization. The concept of fossilization as such came into existence in the field of SLA in 1972. It was when Selinker (1974: 36) conceptualised the notion for

(...) linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL tend to keep in their IL relative to a particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL.

Over the decades, however, to quote the evidence from different sources (cf. Selinker 1974, Selinker 1992, Selinker and Lakshmanan 1993, Selinker and Han 1996, Han 2004), the original definition of fossilization put forward by Selinker has undergone fairly extensive modifications. Not only has the term received a plethora of interpretations, but it has also gained its very pronounced focus in the research into the second and foreign language acquisition.

2. Theoretical aspects of fossilization

The attempts to account for the nature of fossilization reach its origins, search for proofs of its well-attested position in the research literature, and investigate its “operating mechanisms” within the process of the interlanguage development.

The sources of fossilization are numerous. Depending on the approach and classification, they can be rendered as five central processes leading to fossilization (Selinker 1974), encapsulated under the umbrella of external and internal causes of fossilization (Ellis 1995), or represented by Han (2004) as grouped into cognitive, neuro-biological, psychological, socio-affective, and environmental factors contributing to fossilization.

To begin with, in his analysis of factors producing fossilization, Selinker (1974: 37), accentuates the previously mentioned central processes. These constitute:

- Language transfer,
- Transfer of training,
- Strategies of second language learning,
- Strategies of second language communication,
- Overgeneralization of TL linguistic material.

The role *language transfer* plays here follows a very predictable pattern, consisting in a negative influence on the quality of the IL forms, bringing about such a situation in which language items, rules and subsystems, which occur in the IL performance, are L1-induced forms and patterns. In all probability, the interlanguage created in this way is a combination of non-existent structures and language calques.

Transfer of training or, in other words, bad teaching, produces “bad language”. This comprises mainly the appearance of incorrect language forms, and/or overproduction of the correct linguistic items, stemming from faulty training procedures, such as teacher’s and textbook’s drills.

As opposed to transfer of training, *strategies of second language learning* are to place much of the blame for the resultant IL forms on the learner. It is so because it is the learner’s approach to the material to be learned that contributes to the language development. When he/she violates and ignores the rules, or reduces the TL to a simpler system, the output that is produced lacks in the standard and normative language forms.

The same seems to be true of *strategies of second language communication*. They are believed to help the learner approach the communication with the native speakers of the TL, but produce disastrous effects when unsuccessfully applied, or worse, not implemented at all. Such a wrong strategy application may, for instance, dictate to the learner that certain linguistic forms are not necessary for the kind of communication he/she intends to establish, and, in that event, reinforce the unacceptable patterns of conversation. The reverse situation, on the other hand, referred to as no strategy implementation, is most likely to be responsible for communication breakdowns, communication avoidance or refusal to talk. Nothing else seems to be more fossilization-conducive than communication loss.

Influential as the strategy of communication has proved to be with respect to fossilization, the role performed by *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material* should not be undermined. Selinker (1974: 38) presents convincing data to demonstrate a strong influence overgeneralization of TL rules exerts on the formation of the process of fossilization. This influence is evident in any extension of language rules applied by the learner. The rules are usually extended to an environment in which, to the learner, they could logically apply, but just do not, and, instead, result in incorrect or even non-existent structures.

As shown above, each of the factors alone contributes to a lesser or greater extent to language fossilization. However, bearing in mind a multitude of the processes known as central to fossilization, a rule concerning the intensity and significance of their influence can be formulated. Typically, the greater the number of factors involved, the greater the likelihood of fossilized language competence, not to mention combinations of these processes which take the full force of the phenomenon in question and lead to *entirely fossilized interlanguage competence*.

The factors conducive to fossilization in Ellis' (1995: 354) point of view are internal and external in nature (Table 1.1). As it was previously the case, they impact on fossilization differently; they might go in tandem with one another, or give rise to fossilization one at a time. The internal factors, deriving from the learner him/herself, involve

- age, and
- lack of desire to acculturate.

The external ones reflect a sphere of influence on fossilization drawn from the learner environment. They comprise:

- communicative pressure,
- lack of learning opportunity, and
- the nature of the feedback on learner's use of L2.

Factors	Description	Reference
Internal		
1 Age	When learners reach a critical age their brains lose plasticity, with the result that certain linguistic features cannot be mastered.	Scovel 1988
2 Lack of desire to acculturate	As a result of various social and psychological factors, learners make no efforts to adopt TL cultural norms	Schumann 1978a
External		
1 Communicative pressure	Persistent pressure to communicate ideas that require the use of language that exceeds the learner's linguistic competence leads to fossilization	Higgs and Clifford 1982
2 Lack of learning opportunity	Learners lack opportunities for receiving input and also for using the L2	Bickerton 1975
3 The nature of the feedback on learner's use of L2	Positive cognitive feedback (signalling 'I understand you') results in fossilization; negative feedback (signalling 'I don't understand you') helps avoid fossilization	Vigil and Oller 1976

Table 1.1 Causes of fossilization (from Ellis 1995: 354)

As far as the *age* factor is concerned, the point to be stressed here is that it is mainly a group of the learners referred to as “late beginners” or, more precisely, “late starters” who encounter the majority of the language problems. The linguistic difficulties they regularly struggle with and, more often than not, cannot successively resolve, concern the level of phonology. Here, it is the inflexibility of speech organs that is responsible for innumerable pronunciation problems, the so called “foreign accents” being predominant.

Lack of desire to acculturate, whether caused by negative attitudes to the TL or TL milieu, or ego boundaries preventing the learners from acculturation, in many cases, equals lack of desire to master the language. Under these circumstances, the resultant

IL forms are not infrequently deviant non-target language forms, and do not conform to the majority of TL rules.

Communicative pressure, as any kind of pressure, may bring the opposite results. Forced to produce the language that is beyond their capability, the learners refuse to develop their IL system often out of sheer contrariness. They either do not communicate at all or use a very simple language, exposing their language competence to fossilization.

Such disastrous effects, matter-of-factly, are to be maximised together with *learning using L2 input opportunities* minimised or not provided at all. A resulting situation is likely to be indicative of fossilized language competence, containing incorrect or non-existent language structures, outdated vocabulary and/ or bad pronunciation.

Unquestionably, the quality of the language produced by the learners is determined by *the nature of the feedback on learner's use of L2*. Positive feedback, as a reaction showing comprehensibility of the learner's IL despite his/her erroneous performance, does not motivate the learner to work on the language, and, thus, is conducive to fossilization. Negative feedback, on the other hand, being a teacher response intolerant of language inadequacies, helps to prevent fossilization from happening.

As the inventory of the potential sources of fossilization discussed above is neither highly specific nor in-depth in character, Han's (2004: 29) attempt to account for the process of fossilization in detail, seems to supply all the missing information. She introduces the so called taxonomy of putative causal variables influencing fossilization, providing a thorough explanation of the influence of both internal and external factors on the process in question (Table 1.2):

EXTERNAL	Environmental		Absence of corrective feedback Lack of input Reinforcement from linguistic environment Lack of instruction Lack of communicative relevance Lack of written input Language complexity Quality of input Instruction
INTERNAL	Cognitive	Knowledge representation	L1 influence conspiring with other factors L1 influence Lack of access to UG Failure of parameter-resetting Possession of a mature cognitive system Non-operation of UG learning principles Learning inhibiting learning Representational deficits of the language faculty
		Knowledge processing (receptive/productive)	Lack of attention Inability to notice input-output discrepancies False automatization Automatization of the first language system Using top-down processes in comprehension Lack of understanding Use of domain general problem-solving strategies End of sensitivity to language data Lack of opportunity to use the target language The speed with which, and extent to which, automatization has taken place Processing constraints Failure to detect errors Failure to resolve the inherent variation in the interlanguage Reduction in the computational capacity of the language faculty Lack of verbal analytical skills Lack of sensitivity to input
		Psychological	Inappropriate learning strategy Change in the emotional state Reluctance to take the risk of restructuring Simplification Natural tendency to focus on content, not on form Avoidance Transfer of training
	Neuro-biological		Changes in the neural structure of the brain Maturational constraints Age Decrease of cerebral plasticity for implicit acquisition Neural entrenchment Lack of talent
	Socio-affective		Satisfaction of communicative needs Lack of acculturation Will to maintain identity Socio-psychological barriers

Table 1.2. A taxonomy of causal factors of fossilization (adapted from Han 2004: 29)

As can readily be seen, internal factors in Han's (2004) proposition embrace cognitive and psychological foundations of fossilization, while the external ones are purely environmental in character. For the sake of clarity, a compilation of the

sources of fossilization under discussion has been divided into several sub-sections, each offering a more-detailed insight into by now most significant determinants of the phenomenon in focus, and comprising explanations fully representative of each of the categories differentiated above.

2.1. Cognitive explanations of fossilization

Cognitive factors are grouped into those related to knowledge representation, and knowledge processing.

Knowledge representation section (see Table 1.2) consists of all the factors bearing an influence on the actual state of the knowledge of the TL. Here, a discussion starts with *L1* and *L1 influence conspiring with other factors*, namely a relationship between L1 and language transfer. Both have gained the status of factors generating fossilization as a result of generalities and principles. The principles in focus cover the Multiple Effects Principle (MEP). Following from Selinker & Lakshmanan (1993: 198), it states that ‘when two or more SLA factors work in tandem, there is a greater chance of stabilization of interlanguage form leading to possible fossilization’. There is thus an acknowledgement that in every case where the MEP is applicable, language transfer is involved, and a high degree of probability of language fossilization.

Taking into account *lack of access to Universal Grammar* (UG), *failure of parameter resetting* and *non-operation of UG learning principles*, it must be said at the outset that there are different views on whether or not UG is available and engaged in the process of SLA, and whether or not parameters can be reset. In two opposing trends being apparent, it is arguments against UG involved in SLA, embraced in the Parameter Setting Hypothesis (Flynn 1996), that presuppose difficulties by second language learners in that that, as White (1993) puts it, the learner is assumed to be “stuck” with L1 parameters restraining him/her from attaining second language values crucial to successful SLA.

This is particularly true of adult learners, whose lack of access to full range of UG directly contributes to their incomplete L2 ultimate attainment. Stripped of those aspects of UG not incorporated into the L1, and deprived of *UG learning principles*, the learners have a limited knowledge of the TL, their process of learning being effortful and time-consuming.

It is so also by reason of a *mature cognitive system*, which imposes constraints on the process of second language learning, due to the resistance of the L1 cognitive system to the cognitive processes typical of L2 and L2 learning.

This resembles the situation known as *learning inhibiting learning*, taking place as a consequence of the neural system commitment to the first language learning. In plain language, the neural associations formed and fixed as a result of L1 acquisition are hard to change and reluctant to accommodate new input data requisite for successful L2 acquisition. This certainly brings about learner's failure to acquire certain TL features, and, as a matter of fact, explains *representational deficits of the language faculty*, ranging from lexis and syntax to phonology.

Cognitive factors concerning knowledge processing come in great numbers (Table 1.2). To begin with, *lack of attention*, is believed to create numerous gaps in the learner's linguistic repertoire. In consequence, the learner is expected to oversight and overlook a multitude of TL features, producing non-standard variety of language. Similar difficulties can be observed as a result of *lack of understanding*. It can give rise not only to major misconceptions at the level of rule internalization, but also misunderstanding at the level of language production, such as communication in L2, which is likely to be established only in the case of inevitable contacts with TL speakers, provoking fossilization hereby.

Top-down processing in comprehension, when based on false information and limited knowledge of the target language, seems to bear additional load on learner's ability to understand the language. What is more, it can result in a total lack of comprehension, and learner's lack of sensitivity to input.

Lack of sensitivity to input, which goes well together with *end of sensitivity to language data*, and *inability to notice input-output discrepancies*, tends to be responsible for language calques manifested in grammar, lexis and pronunciation problems. This implies long-lasting free variation and, what follows, the production of grammatically unacceptable structures, as well as lexical items inappropriate in a given context. Further consequences seem to lead to *failure to detect errors* and *resolve the inherent variation in the interlanguage*. The former is expected to be reflected in bad habits deeply-rooted in learner's systematic and fossilized errors, the latter being liable for free variability realised as, for instance, a random use of grammatical and ungrammatical structures.

Basing on a fairly accurate assumption that a degree of language correctness is utterly determined by learner's *exposure to input* and his/her *opportunities to use the TL*, the very two factors seem to play an important role in developing the language competence of an L2 learner, impeding or facilitating the process of IL development. In principle, lack of use and exposure to the TL can only be blamed for a gradual language deterioration, starting from low fluency and low proficiency in language, e.g. outdated vocabulary devoid of every-day-use expressions like idiomatic phrases and phrasal verbs. Combined with *lack of contact with the TL milieu*, the above-mentioned are likely to impact on the quality of the language being mastered even more dramatically, making the language produced sound far from the culture-specific etiquette. Consequently, it is very often the case that the language produced gets automatised. *Automatization of L1* is commonly believed to lead to *false automatization* of L2, which, in tandem with too *extensive automatization*, is supposed to create bad language habits. These, in turn, are manifested via the language in the form of numerous repetitions, the commonest of which involve pre-fabricated patterns, use of all-purpose words and fillers, and *lack of verbal analytical skills*. The latter is expected to produce chaotic and disconnected chains of language, constrained time and again by the learner's general inability to think analytically.

Processing constraints, as the name suggests, constrain the L2 knowledge processing, resulting in, among other things, random use of grammatical and ungrammatical linguistic features and structures. Typically, the morphemes that do not carry a heavy semantic load are subject to change, which is sufficient to make the adult L2 speech sound and look non-native. Further on, the problems with knowledge processing can as well be responsible for *reductions in the computational capacity of the language faculty* and *use of domain general problem-solving strategies*. The suggestion is that the former may result in learner's inability to assess his/her actual linguistic capacity, and, thus, production of erroneous constructions. The latter, apparently less disastrous in its consequences, may occur harmful to the process of language learning when overused or abused for it does not always solve linguistic problems to use problem-solving strategies. On the contrary, it may lead to an ineffective implementation or lack of implementation of other learning strategies, this having detrimental effects on the quality of the learner's language.

2.2. Psychological perspectives on fossilization

Psychologically-invested factors are those which afflict the learner's linguistic behaviour dictated by his/her feelings, mental processes, personality features, as well as deliberate learning choices.

In the first place, the issue of *inappropriate learning strategies* should be brought into light. Apart from the fact that they impede learning, they do not allow for an effective use of the knowledge already possessed by the learners. As a matter of fact, the language rules operating in the learner's IL system might be violated or misinterpreted, as a result of which the learners might have difficulties when producing a written or spoken variety of TL, or their performance might leave much to be desired.

This is particularly true of *simplification* or *avoidance strategy*. The former is widely-known to bring about grossly simplified or even pidginised language forms. The latter, whether it be understood after Nakuma (1998) as 'the deliberate choice of an L2 learner not to acquire a given L2 form, probably because the given target L2 form is believed to be available already in the L2 learner's acquired baggage', or learner's inappropriate application of the components of strategic competence, is likely to culminate in language regression. As shown in Ślęzak-Świat & M. S. Wysocka (2007)¹, the improper application of either of determining communicative goals, assessing communicative resources, planning communication or executing communication components has proved to perform the role of a fossilizing factor among FL learners. Irrespective of the component the learners fail to apply, the resulting situation is invariably that of the learner's partial or complete refusal to use the foreign language.

Communication avoidance can also derive from the learners' *reluctance to take the risk of restructuring*. Instead of form reformulations and alterations, the learners give up and do not say a word, evoking fossilization.

Equally fossilization-provoking seems to be the learner's *natural tendency to focus on content, not on form*. As Skehan (1998) claims, the meaning priority, especially evident in the case of the adult learners, relegates the form of language into the category of secondary importance. This momentarily results in learners' tendencies

¹ For the purposes of the thesis a distinction has been made between the author of the work and prof. Maria Wysocka referred to as M. S. Wysocka and M. Wysocka respectively.

to ‘say less but mean more’, without exhaustive analyses and use of the structure of an already deviant language. As long as communicative effectiveness is achieved, the erroneous structures are doomed to survive and stabilize, usually becoming nothing but syntactic fossils.

As far as *transfer of training* is concerned, as has already been pointed out, it is considered to be the source of misused and overused syntactic forms. Be it the actual examples of teacher’s bad language, or the result of textbook content and method, they all constitute an “overture” to fossilized competence.

Destructive though the influence of the above-discussed psychological aspects on the language development may seem, it is change in learners’ emotional state which is known as the most devastating factor. Following Preston (1989: 180), ‘the degree to which emotional involvement distracts a speaker from attention to form is reflected in backsliding for language learners’. In consequence, such emotionally invested conversations are nothing but instances of L2 inaccuracy leading to fossilization.

2.3. Neuro-biological basis of fossilization

Taking into consideration neuro-biological constraints triggering fossilization (Table 1.2), much of the onus falls on *age* and *maturational constraints*. What is at issue is Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which, in its second version under the name of the Maturational State Hypothesis, holds that

(...) early in life, humans have a superior language capacity. The capacity disappears or declines with maturation, i.e. even when it is used normally for L1 acquisition.

(Long 1993:197)

The implications for SLA indicate that the lower the age at which the learners are exposed to a language, the higher the chances of long-term success in that particular language. Learning difficulties the adult learners are believed to experience are specifically determined by the Aging Hypothesis (Barkow et al. 1992), the Fragile Rote Hypothesis (Birdsong 2005), and the Starting Small Hypothesis (Newport 1990) respectively. The Aging Hypothesis postulates a marked slowdown in activity, energy and flexibility people face with age. A serious decline is likely to be observed with respect to the storage of new memories and the retrieval of the old ones, which, in learning conditions, readily translates into hardships in storing and retrieving vocabulary. Secondly, to build on the Fragile Rote Hypothesis, with increasing age, learners may have problems with irregular language forms, including irregular inflections, use of particles and prepositions, due to the neuroanatomical changes in

the parts of the brain subserving the declarative memory system. Declining memory, as the third assumption has it, may be responsible for difficulties with abstract syntactic patterns. It is so because the adult learners, according to MacWhinney's (2006: 145) Starting Small Hypothesis, 'learn each new noun as a separate analysed unit, rather than as a part of a richer phrase', thus being incapable of picking up large unanalysed chunks.

As it follows from the above, the recommendable age of onset, as Lenneberg (1967) suggests, is the pre-puberty period. Others, like Geschwind (1970) or Krashen (1973), assumed a much earlier age. Everything boils down to the time of lateralization and effects its complete development brings to the process of language development. To name a few, the consequences in question range from *changes in the neural structure of the brain*, predicted by the Neural Commitment Hypothesis (Lenneberg 1967), and *the neural entrenchment* in line with *decrease of cerebral plasticity for implicit acquisition*, encompassed in MacWhinney's (2006) Entrenchment Hypothesis, and Lenneberg's (Lenneberg 1967) Lateralization Hypothesis respectively. According to these accounts, language functions responsible for language acquisition, which are controlled mainly in the left hemisphere, are no longer operating and cannot be reactivated once lateralization has been accomplished. The neural entrenchment, as has already been hinted at, due to the resistance of the L1 neural system to that of L2, often when the L1 form is already well consolidated by the time the learner tries to add the TL form to the language system, is responsible for failures to acquire certain TL features. This makes it difficult for people to be able ever again to easily acquire the language. Conversely, the learning process becomes explicit, and does not take place without a great deal of effort invested on the part of the learners. In addition, lack of brain plasticity, which reduces its capacity for new forms of learning, comes down to a non-fluent and non-native language construct. There exists a substantiated body of evidence that achieving native-like suprasegmental and segmental phonology is impossible with so called "late-starters", and constitutes subject to re-occurring inconsistency in produced language forms. The source of difficulties in acquiring the pronunciation of a second language is suggested by Klein (1997: 51). The problems are known to derive from the fact that:

- A learner may simply feel it unnecessary to improve his pronunciation any further, in the light of his communicative needs;

- He may feel the need (without being aware of it) to keep at a distance from his social environment, that is to preserve at least a part of previous social identity;
- The language processor itself may have undergone physiological changes with age (in the central nervous system) which prevent the learner from acquiring a native pronunciation of the target language;
- The learner may no longer notice the difference between his own production and that of his environment

The extent to which correct language forms are produced, is, nonetheless, determined by *latent psychological structure (LPS)*, the (non)-activation and (non)-realization of which into the actual structure of any language conditions, as Lenneberg (1967) observes, conditions interlanguage development. Obviously, the access to LPS guarantees realizations of L2 grammatical structures and, hence, L2 complete mastery. Lack of access to the device in question results in non-activation of L2 grammatical structures, and realization of non-target language forms.

Also to be considered is learners' *lack of talent* popularly known to directly determine the IL development. It goes without saying that there is a difference between learning a language and learning a language successfully. A degree of success is attributed to and largely dependent on individual learner's *language aptitude*, preconditioning his/her predispositions to learn the language. Those not predisposed towards a successful language learning represent a group of learners facing a wide array of learning difficulties in their struggle to master the language. Consequently, their language competence is, more often than not, exposed to fossilization.

2.4. Socio-affective accounts of fossilization

As far as the socio-affective account of fossilization is concerned (Table 1.2), *satisfaction of communicative needs* is given priority here. As it emerges from Selinker's (1974) evidence, the learner's self-confidence and perceptions of his/her language proficiency as fairly enough to communicate in L2 stop him/her from learning. Even though the learners might be aware of language inconsistencies and deviant forms fixed in their linguistic repertoire, they usually do not make any effort to restructure them since the language they produce meets their expectations. Communicatively efficient as the language may seem to its actual users, it is, in fact, on the right way to regress, on account of being used fragmentarily, and/or being abused.

When it comes to language efficiency in every sense of the word, this can never be achieved without getting acculturated to the new culture, i.e. the Target

Language Community (TLC). The degree of acculturation, according to Schumann (1976: 136 ff.), is determined by the degree of social and psychological distance. Here, the word “distance” does not denote town-to-town remoteness as it stands for the learner’s perceptions of (dis)similarities between two cultures. These condition the amount of contact with the TL the learner experiences, and the degree to which he/she absorbs the input available. When the learner’s perceptions are negative and the in-between culture comparison he/she draws is not to the TLC’s advantage, he/she is expected to show unwillingness to integrate with the TL milieu, and readiness to preserve at least some of the behaviour patterns typical of L1. Therefore, the greater the social and/or psychological distance between the cultures seems to the learners, the bigger the difficulties they will have in learning the second language, culminating not only in communicative inefficiency, but worse, in language regression or pidginization. In the case the latter becomes persistent, it is evident that the learner no longer pursues the TL standards in his/her learning. What comes as a result is early fossilization being equalled by Mühlhäusler (1993) to pidginization.

Analogous to *lack of acculturation*, *will to maintain identity* is synonymous to a negative impact on the SLA. As has been proved by Preston (1989: 254), the behaviour in question generates deliberate attempts made by the learner in order not to integrate with a given speech community. This can be explained in a multiple of ways. Following the Accommodation Theory, the reasons are believed to involve, among others, the learner’s weak identification with the outgroup, being the TLC, or displaying strong (thick) ego boundaries, each predisposing the learner to the accentuation of ethnic speech markers realized, for instance, in the form of foreign accents. If this is the case, the learner’s linguistic behaviour, by all accounts, exhibits symptoms of *downward divergence* leading to what Preston (1989: 255) termed *sociolinguistic fossilization*. Sociolinguistic fossilization is defined as ‘fossilized forms representing a subtle constriction of the variability which characterizes the learner’s identity in the speech community’. Unquestionably, it has its roots in previously mentioned ego boundaries. Significantly, the research has demonstrated that ego boundaries at the thick end of the continuum exert a negative impact on the learning process. The thick ego boundary people are likely to feel and show stiff resistance to the learning material, expecting them to open to new information, tolerate ambiguity, and suspend their own identity boundaries. This refusal to relate

oneself with other people and other ways of perceiving the world, mostly typical of the TLC, causes what Ehrman (1999: 71) calls 'regression in the service of the ego'. Its connections to fossilization are to be evident in learners' reluctance to accommodate themselves to the etiquette of the TL environment, permeating their unwillingness to accommodate to the features unique to the TL.

Other reasons than that, as Brown (1987: 135) accentuates, are grounded in *socio-psychological* barriers stemming from learners' negative *attitudes* towards the TL, TL milieu, and/or negative *stereotypes* they hold about the TL related issues. Again, critical or disapproving opinions about the TL environment momentarily influence attitudes towards the TL as such, it being treated and learned superficially, giving rise to "deep" fossilization. A good example of the mechanisms operating between attitudes towards TL community and L2 fossilization is the case of Turks in Germany. Selinker (1992: 225) refers to it as a "sociolinguistic 'gate-keeping' situation", such as a burning need to get a job or find an apartment, in which Turks, coming across unsympathetic and unhelpful Germans, fossilised "from day one", meaning they "got stuck" with the German language immediately.

2.5. Environmental conditions for fossilization

The relationship between the environment and language fossilization is reckoned with in this sub-section, organised around the factors claimed to impact on fossilization with reference to the classroom situation in which, as Corder (1976: 68) pointedly remarks,

(...) learners do not use their interlanguage very often (...) for what we may call "normal" or "authentic" purposes. The greater part of interlanguage data in the classroom is produced as a result of formal exercises and bears the same relation to the spontaneous communicative use of language as the practising tennis strokes does to playing tennis

As far as the interlanguage use is concerned, it all depends a great deal on the *amount* and *quality of input* the learners are exposed to. Typically, the classroom input is very much limited and lacks in language variety. Most often, it comes from the teacher talk, student talk, and language materials to hand. Teacher talk, like foreigner talk, consists in adjustments at all language levels, and, by definition, is unnatural and artificial. In similar vein, student talk is given undesirable attributes on account of its unnatural way to develop. Lastly, the language materials widely-used in the classroom are non-authentic ones, and, thus, the input they provide is confined, more often than not, within the contents of the coursebook. Clearly, the material

constraints in line with minimum or lack of authentic input, be it spoken or written one, and restrictive opportunity to use the language do not pertain to the features facilitating rapid development, among which Ellis (1994: 161) suggests:

- A high quantity of input directed at the learner
- The learner's perceived need to communicate in the L2
- Exposure to a high quantity of directives
- Exposure to a high quantity of "extending utterances"
- Opportunities for uninhibited "practice".

More specifically, *a high quantity of input directed at the learner* makes him/her "well-familiarized" with the TL. It entails a great chance for the learner to learn the language by exposure, and insurmountable difficulties when the input is missing.

The learner's perceived need to communicate in the L2 is bound to develop his/her speaking skills and overcome inhibitions, this being impossible when the learner denies the need to speak the TL.

Both *exposure to a high quantity of directives* and *exposure to a high quantity of "extending utterances"* facilitate comprehension in L2, the former resulting in the learner's proper reactions to input, the latter being evident in his/her understanding and realization of complex utterances and longer strings of the TL. By contrast, lack of exposure of either type is expected to be tantamount to learner's failure to understand L2, as well as his/her tendencies to produce a very simple or even pidginised language. The difficulties under discussion are often to be blamed on L2 complexity, not infrequently discouraging the learners from learning.

Finally, *opportunities for uninhibited "practice"* are likely to promote learner's unreserved linguistic behaviours, such as, for example, his/her performance organized around typical every-day-life situations to be encountered in the TL environment. Lack of that kind of practice, on the other hand, is believed to bring about the production of artificial discourse, and, thus, convince the learners of *lack of communicative relevance* their performance bears. This, in turn, may result in learners' refusal to practise the language.

In terms of the classroom discourse employed, both spoken and written texts are worked on and produced by the learners. Basing on McCarthy (2001), the discourses display antagonistic characteristics, serve different purposes, and pose marked difficulties among the learners. Among other things, it is an obvious

statement to make that *unplanned discourse* (as opposed to planned discourse) is a trigger of fossilization. Defined by Ochs (1979: 55) as ‘lacking forethought and organizational preparation’, it fulfils the necessary conditions for the language item to be fossilised. According to Hulstijn (1989: 20), it is in casual, spontaneous and unattended speech that the learner is more likely to rely on fossilized language forms owing to automatization, and lack of attention to form accompanying the production of a vernacular style. In their study, Zabor & Zabor (2000: 52) prove that the learners perform more accurate in writing, given ample time to organize the discourse. This sufficient amount of time is supposed to make the learners monitor their performance. Focused on form, the learners are more likely to produce fossilization-free language forms.

The relationship between form-focused performance and fossilization leads to a discussion on the role of *instruction* in SLA. Its effects on SLA, as well as potential influence on fossilization, have been a debatable issue. As of yet, the arguments in defence of positive consequences the formal instruction bears on L2 learners’ competences have pointed out its helpfulness to increase learners’ sensitivity to formal properties of the TL, and, in so doing, acquire the linguistic features to occur in the developmental process. In this view, *lack of instruction* definitely fosters fossilization. Because the learners are deprived of the so called “point of reference” while mastering the language, their performance is doomed to be composed of a legion of ungrammaticalities and inconsistencies. On the other hand, the views adduced against instruction underline its selective and restrictive impact on the learning experience judged by the setting constraints, being the impoverished input, teacher training, and transfer of training in particular. In this proposition, the *instruction* alone is considered the “ally” of fossilization. However convincing this opinion may seem to one group of researchers, the others, the author of the thesis included, may have a strong claim that instruction does promote fossilization on the condition that it is inadequate to the level of learners’ advancement, misgiven to the learners, or, generally speaking, of poor quality.

As a further example of detrimental effects the environment and the person of a teacher exert on the SLA, the issue of *feedback* should be raised (see Table 1.4). Following Vigil and Oller (1976: 286), there are two major dimensions of feedback, i.e. cognitive and affective. The cognitive type transmits messages about facts, suppositions and truths by means of words, phrases and sentences. On the contrary,

the affective one transmits messages using paralinguistic devices such as facial expression, gesture or tone of voice. In either cases, the information conveyed can be positive, negative or neutral in character. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that, as Klein (1997) remarks, *lack of negative evidence* or, in other words, lack of information that a certain string of the language is erratic, and does not belong to the L2 system, impedes learning. Furthermore, to quote Brown's (1987: 187) attempt to account for the relationship between feedback and fossilization

() fossilized items are those ungrammatical and incorrect items in the speech of a learner which gain first *positive affective feedback* ('I like it') then *positive cognitive feedback* ('I understand'), reinforcing an incorrect form of the language'

Harmful as the use of the inappropriate form of feedback has proved, *absence of corrective feedback* is equally damaging to SLA. Understood as teacher's lack of intervention into the learner's incorrect language, it does not only impair the quality of the output produced at a given moment, but it, at the same time, distorts the whole interlanguage development, the outcome of which being fossilization.

3. Approaches to fossilization

As numerous as the afore-discussed accounts of fossilization are approaches to characterising the phenomenon in focus. Explanations of the concept of fossilization range from one- and two-word clarifications to a sentence or even a paragraph long descriptions. Irrespective of the length and the exact wording of the interpretations, they primarily aim at revealing the complexity of the term. For the sake of clarity, the selection and order of definitions introduced follows a general-to-specific order.

Generally speaking, the notion of fossilization is coterminous with:

- 'Stopping short' (Selinker 1974: 36),
- 'Ultimate attainment' (Selinker 1974: 36),
- 'Language incompleteness' (Schachter 1990: 99),
- '(...) non-progression of learning (...)' (Selinker 1992: 257),
- '(...) non-learning' (Selinker 1992: 257),
- '(...) an early halt to further progress in the new language (...)' (Paul 1993:93),
- 'The point at which development towards the target language norm stops' (Norris 1995:53),

- ‘(...) cessation of further systematic development in the interlanguage’. (Selinker&Han 1996)
- ‘The inability of a person to attain native-like ability in the target language’. (Lowther 1983: 127), or
- ‘Permanent failure of L2 learners to develop complete mastery of TL norms’ (Bartelt 1993:127).

Judging by the above-enumerated, a great number of clarifications to the concept of fossilization reveal its temporary and regressive character resulting in language blockage and impediment. Whether it be two-word definitions or longer descriptions of the phenomenon in focus, they all fall into the category of inaccuracies and shortcomings in the target language, their common denominator being lack of interlanguage development. This “stagnation” in learning, however, results in far-reaching consequences which do not only add much “flavour” to the very interpretations of fossilization alone, but also allow for its thorough investigation. Studies on fossilization, as it can be expected, have contributed to a multitude of more specific views on fossilization widely held by the resarchers to date.

These more specific judgements are encapsulated in the following statements portraying fossilization as:

- ‘Regular reappearance or re-emergence in IL productive performance of linguistic structures which were thought to have disappeared’ (Selinker 1974: 36),
- ‘Appearance of certain structures despite continuous exposure to natural and pedagogical L2 data’ (Selinker & Han 1996)
- ‘Persistent non-target-like structures’ (Selinker & Lamendella 1978: 187), or, to put it in a bit lengthy fashion,
- ‘The long term persistence of plateaus of non-target- like structures in the interlanguage of non-native speakers (even those who are very fluent speakers of the L2)’ (Selinker & Lakshmanan 1993: 197).

Diversified and virtually infinite as the above-presented list of explanations may seem, the interpretations provided are neither conclusive nor irrefutable. Being a complex and multifaceted issue, fossilization is not a clear-cut concept, and it would be inopportune to reduce it to a single definition whatsoever. On the contrary, it

seems to be an “as-many-researchers-as-many-opinions phenomenon”, subject to changes, modifications and verifications.

The opinions on fossilization, be it general in nature or specific in character, are two-fold, i.e. derive from two different approaches to the subject-matter. The first one identifies fossilization with incorrect language forms exclusively. The other, however, places fossilization under the heading of both an erroneous and non-erroneous phenomenon.

The former standpoint is, among others, fully shared by Hyltenstam (1988: 68 or Preston (1989: 245), who conceive of fossilization as ‘features of the second language learner’s inter-language that deviate from the native-speaker norm’, and ‘persistence of an incorrect form in the emerging interlanguage’ respectively. Brown (1987: 186), in his detailed description of fossilization, shows the same attitude to the phenomenon under investigation, recapitulating with a definition of a construct of ‘the relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person’s second language competence’. This way or another, fossilization is explicitated as a phenomenon pertaining to the language shape(s) far from the language norm(s).

Much as has been said on the erroneous character of fossilization, the latter point of view, supported by the author of the thesis, mirrors the opinions expressed by Vigil and Oller (1976) or Ellis (1994) who all perceive fossilization as consisting in both correct and incorrect forms. To provide evidence for the existence of erroneous and non-erroneous representations of fossilization, Ellis (1994: 48) demonstrates the exact mechanism responsible for the processes under discussion:

If, when fossilization occurs, the learner has reached a stage of development in which feature x in his interlanguage has assumed the same form as in the target language, then fossilization of the correct form will occur. If, however, the learner has reached a stage in which feature y still does not have the same form as the target language, the fossilization will manifest itself as error.

The mechanism, as can readily be seen from the above quotation, stands for the learner’s stage of language development and internalization of language rules. These, unsurprisingly, determine the quality of the language and, at the same time, indicate the extent to which the language has fossilized.

4. Manifestations of fossilization

The actual ways whereby fossilization is realised and subject to the analysis relate to the ‘processes involved in creating and expressing meaning through

language' Richards et al. (1999: 203) classify under the umbrella of *language production*.

Accordingly, the potential “objects” of fossilization, within the realm of language being produced, fall into two categories the author of the work refers to as *erroneous* and *non-erroneous fossilization*. The first of them has been distinguished to cover the production of correct TL forms and features, whereas the other has been conceived of as consisting of a wide range of L2 inadequacies and faulty language.

As regards the deficits in language indicative of fossilization, it is, as Han (2004: 25 ff.) claims in her overview of the already-recognized reflexes of fossilization, predominantly manifested via:

- stabilized or fossilized errors,
- systematic errors,
- random use of ungrammatical structures,
- long-lasting free variation,
- backsliding, and
- bad language habits.

By definition, stabilized or fossilised errors are those deeply ingrained deviant forms FL learners cannot dispense with. Systematic errors, as the name suggests, cover those incorrect language forms which the learner produces systematically. In opposition to this systematicity, however, stand ungrammatical structures used randomly, them being a proof of a yet uninternalized language system. Long-lasting free-variation, ordinarily, induces errors which take on the form of linguistic items “misplaced” or “mismatched”. Backsliding consists in those inappropriate language features which were thought to have disappeared from learner’s interlanguage a long time ago. Bad language habits, accordingly, are manifested in learners’ habitual errors, i.e. routinised language behaviours deviating from TL norms.

Littlewood (1996:34) adds to this detailed inventory the occurrence of non-systematic errors, whereas Corder (1993: 27) quotes Schachter’s resident errors. The former are not as much the result of an underlying system of language as they are caused by immediate communication strategies and performance factors, whereas the latter are commonly understood as exhibiting the properties and characteristics ascribed to both fossilized and non-systematic errors. And, last but not least, aside from repetitions, false starts, fillers and pauses which are high frequency instances of

a behavioural evidence of fossilization, Scarcella (1993: 109) draws attention to discourse accent whereby he means ‘some of the conversational features (Cfs) of the learner’s L2 in the same way in which they are employed in the learner’s first language (L1)’. These do not preclude either strange-sounding speech markers or language hedges which tend to persist permanently for many adult L2 learners.

In the case of correct language forms, which, in their own right, constitute sufficient grounds for fossilization, the list of the most apparent evidence of the fossilized language competence involves:

- low proficiency,
- low fluency,
- random use of grammatical structures (Han 2004: 26),
- overuse of progressive speech markers (De Bot & Hulsen 2002: 262),
- conversions (De Bot & Hulsen 2002: 262),
- regressive speech markers (De Bot & Hulsen 2002: 262),
- overuse of conversational features (Scarcella 1993: 109),
- overuse of hedges and emphatics (Williams 1990: 126),
- lexical simplification (Blum-Kulka & Levenston 1983: 121), and
- language habits.

Generally speaking, low proficiency is reflected in learner’s poor skills in using a language. This, accordingly, may be reflected in reading, writing, speaking as well as comprehension problems. The reading difficulties are expected to be manifested via lack of learner’s understanding of a given text or his/her inability to read fluent English. Writing problems are believed to start at the level of sentence construction, not to mention intersentential and intrasentential relationships, such as text coherence and sentence cohesion. Low proficiency in speaking is usually mirrored by the learners’ inability to get the meaning across, or, for instance, their avoidance of communication. Difficulties with comprehension, on the other hand, might be the reason of the previously-mentioned communication problems, and, apart from that, are likely to cause misunderstandings. Low fluency, following Leeson (1975) and Nowak-Mazurkiewicz (2002), is not only evident in wrong pronunciation, intonation and stress patterns, but also numerous repetitions, and hesitation sounds, like, for instance false starts and fillers. Random use of grammatical structures is a distinctive feature of a correct but chaotic language performance, many a time difficult to

comprehend and follow. Its difficulty derives from the fact that it is hard to predict when and how often these grammatically correct language forms will appear in a given context, making it impossible to anticipate the shape and structure of communication as such. The afore-mentioned overuse of progressive speech markers such as, for example, excessive cut-offs, causes interruptions which, more often than not, change the language being produced into a medley of bits and pieces. Such a fragmented and disconnected nature of the discourse is very likely to bring about misunderstandings on the part of both its sender(s) and receiver(s). Conversations are reflected in syntactic changes of the sentences produced. These cover substitutions of complex sentences with simple ones, and marked structures with those un-marked, as well as reliance on a restricted syntax. Regressive speech markers, such as, for instance, “uh” or “er” sounds, result in lengthy and slow speech, due to moments of hesitation and long pauses. These, in turn, lead to unfinished and incomplete sentences, and/or a complete but “delayed” production. The overuse of conversational features like topic shifts, interruption or back channel cues, contributes to frequent misunderstandings and hardships to continue with the train of thought. The resultative language production, as it was previously the case, tends to be fragmentary, multi-track and, hence, ambiguous. Excessive hedges and emphatics, on the other hand, are likely to result in verbiage or, in other words, empty and meaningless strings of language. If this is the case, the language seems to serve as an instrument to produce sounds but not say a word in fact. Lexical simplification, as Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983: 121) put it, is evident in “making do with less words”. It ranges from the replacement of difficult and long lexical items with simple and short vocabulary, the use of approximative meanings, and L1 incorporation to being economical on TL words. Consequently, however, the learners are expected to avoid certain topics, and abandon message delivery due to the lack of linguistic means to fill in their semantic gaps. Finally, language habits, which are defined here as correct language forms in the shape of pre-fabricated patterns and routine formulas used over-excessively, are bound to be responsible for the production of empty words and expressions, similar to the afore-said hedges and emphatics.

As a matter of fact, all of the symptoms of fossilization presented above bring about discourse incoherence and, hence, are responsible for incomprehensibility and misinterpretations the interlocutors experience. These misconceptions, which, as a rule, have a negative influence on the flow of conversation, exert a disastrous effect

on the language when those above-listed “language devices” are heavily overused. The overuse of formulaic language, for example, has proved to be devoid of its function subsumed by Lesser and Erman (1977: 794) under the heading of “islands of reliability” used in difficult situations, such as flawed speech or communication breakdowns. Instead of equipping a learner with ready-made chunks of language to choose from and carry on speaking, they cause strings of non-fluent language manifested via the language in the form of numerous repetitions. The commonest of them involve:

- the use of all-purpose words as *you know*,
- fillers, i.e. *er*, *well*, or
- pre-fabricated patterns like: *I don't know how to say it*, *I don't know how to put it*.

The above-enumerated examples of formulas can be interpreted in many ways, both with respect to a variety of sources they derive from, and the influence they have on the interlanguage development. As regards the source of language habits, the suggestion is that they might involve, among other things, language deficits as e.g. gaps in the linguistic repertoire, or lack of creativity on the part of the learners. When it comes to the impact these language patterns have on the process of developing language competence, it is, the language stoppage and frozen competence they lead to.

Numerous and diversified as the manifestations of fossilization appear, there exists at least one more “distinctive feature” of the phenomenon in question Han (2004) refers to as variable learning outcomes obtained by the learner/user of the target language. This particular feature has not been elsewhere categorized as either correct or incorrect reflexes of fossilization for they depend a great deal on the ratio of correct language compared with the incorrect one, most often being composed of the instances of both.

Much as has been dwelled on the realizations of fossilization with regards to the language being created as such, it is, as DeKeyser (2000) underlines, the tools whereby the symptoms of fossilized competence manifest themselves that matter a lot, and cannot be disregarded or underrated here. Obviously, the tools determine the form of the language and language discourse being examined for fossilization. Apart from spoken and written performance itself which, generally speaking, testifies to the

instances of both erroneous and non-erroneous language production like those previously discussed, the most detailed and, thus, specifically recommended seem *grammaticality judgement tests*. They consist in the procedures aimed at judging the grammaticality and ungrammaticality of L2 sentences, and accomplish the function of providing a sufficient round of evidence for fossilization, on the basis of learners' (in)accuracy in their metalinguistic judgements. Typically, the very measures taken to evaluate learners' grammatical knowledge, as Lightbown and Spada (2000: 207) have it, include presentation of the language material to a given group or individual students, correction of language judged to be incorrect, and explanation of a TL form, comprising information on implicit and explicit language rules rather than actual corrections. Such an approach, as Han (2006: 62) correctly concludes, offers

a focused scrutiny on specific linguistic features, and a determination of knowledge of what is, and more importantly, what is not, grammatical – a crucial index of the nature of L2 knowledge

The efficiency and usefulness of this method was proved by DeKeyser (2000) in his study of Hungarian native speakers of English as L2 who had lived in the U.S. for about 34 years on average. The subjects' task was to judge the ungrammaticality of the structures presented above (Table 1.3). The results DeKeyser (2000: 511) reports on reflect a magnitude of the problems the subjects encountered when performing the grammaticality judgement task, being at the same time the evidence of fossilised competence in the case of the group examined:

1.	present progressive with auxiliary omitted (e.g., <i>Tom working in his office right now.</i>);
2.	determiners omitted (e.g., <i>Tom is reading book in the bathtub.</i>);
3.	determiners used with abstract nouns (e.g., <i>The beauty is something that lasts forever.</i>);
4.	wh-question without do-support (e.g., <i>Who you meet at the park every-day?</i>);
5.	wh-questions without subject-verb inversion (e.g., <i>What Marsha is bringing to the party?</i>);
6.	irregular plurals regularized (e.g., <i>A shoe salesman sees many foots throughout the day.</i>);
7.	wrong subcategorization of verb for gerund, infinitive, and to + infinitive (e.g., <i>George says much too softly.</i>);
8.	adverb between the verb and the object (e.g., <i>The student eats quickly his meals.</i>).

Table 1.3. Fossilization manifested via grammaticality judgement task (after DeKeyser 2000: 511)

As the above list shows, the grammaticality judgement task allows for more precision when examining the language for fossilization. It resides in the fact that it is not only possible to recognise, for example, this apparently persistent ungrammaticality of structures, but their diversification and deviations from the TL norm as well.

5. Evidence for fossilization

Be it erroneous or non-erroneous fossilization reflected in the spoken or written discourse, the immediate question that arises concerns the so called perfect conditions and means implemented to study fossilization. In his discussion on how to obtain evidence for fossilization, Han (2004: 90 ff.) enumerates five major approaches:

- the typical error approach,
- the advanced-learner approach,
- the corrective-feedback approach,
- the length-of-residence approach, and
- the longitudinal approach.

The typical error approach studies errors that typify a group of L2 learners with the same L1 background, and a varying degree of L2 proficiency. It rests on the assumption that it is those errors that are common to the community of L2 learners examined, and, at the same time, characteristic of its most advanced language users that should be treated a diagnostic of fossilization.

The advanced-learner approach, as the name indicates, examines very advanced learners, referred to as “near-native speakers”. The premise is that the differences between native speakers and near-native ones are subtle and limited, and, as Hyldenstam (1988: 499) claims, these ‘few deviances from the native norm that do exist [among the latter] should be more certain candidates for inclusion in the category of fossilization’.

Basing on its name, the corrective-feedback approach investigates the learner’s reaction to the corrective feedback. It postulates that those errors which persist despite the pedagogic intervention are a sign that learning has ceased to develop, and, thus, constitute the evidence of fossilization.

The length-of-residence approach, accordingly, studies learners who have lived in the TL milieu for some time. The underlying assumption of this method is that the

length of residence is equated with the amount of the TL the learners are exposed to. Thus, in practical terms, it is those with the most restricted input that are most likely expected to suffer from fossilization.

In final, the longitudinal approach scrutinises learners for a long time-span. It is based on the so called process perspective on the problem examined which, as Long (2003: 499) posits, allows for a complete picture of fossilization in that that it analyses the learner's language systematically and thoroughly, including 'changes in form-function relationships over time, zig-zag developmental curves, and U-shaped behaviour'.

The question that appears at this point, however, is related to the choice of the best means when determining fossilization. In his attempt to arrive at a workable solution to the problem, Scarcella (1993) proposes a series of steps to be taken to identify and diagnose the subject-matter which, at the same time, constitute the necessary *pre-conditions for fossilization*. By these he means the circumstances under which an observable piece of evidence for fossilization can be obtained in the most reliable way.

According to Scarcella (1993: 131), to make it evident that the language competence has fossilized, first and foremost, it is necessary to demonstrate that the language feature has completely ceased development towards the TL norm.

This entails, with respect to potential researchers, an analysis of learner's speech across time. It is so because the language may change, specifically '(...) merge, disappear, re-emerge, take on a new form, functions, co-occurrence, restrictions, distributions, etc.'.

Secondly, what is being emphasized is the necessity to bear in mind that fossilized language production remains stable, i.e. unchanged over time. Therefore, it is advisable to examine the language at various intervals over a certain time period so as to distinguish stable from unstable language production.

Finally, the last piece of advice derives from the fact that fossilization is conditioned by the circumstances of the discourse domain under which it appears. That is why the language learners/users have to be examined across all language domains to prevent overgeneralisations based on the language performance within a single discourse domain.

All things considered, the typical error approach, looking at learners at different proficiency levels, is expected to produce too general a picture of a

fossilised language learner/user. The advanced-learner approach, in the absence of a diachronic treatment, can be accused of giving no concrete proof that the language deviations result from long-term stabilization or recent restructuring. The corrective-feedback approach seems to be too limited in scope, and, thus, has two major drawbacks. First, it appears to operate in the case of the learner's oral performance exclusively. Second, its efficiency is under question as, generally speaking, the feedback process is influenced by such factors as, for example, time, explicitness and learner's interpretation. The limitations put on the length-of-residence procedure, i.e. the informants who reside in the TL environment, exclude its implementation in the formal context being the setting of the present study. No such constraints are imposed on the longitudinal approach. This particular method, being unlimited either in terms of time or scope, makes it possible for the researchers to detect any form of (non)-learning simultaneously and over time. By being observational, on the other hand, it promises the most reliable and valid evidence of the reflexes of fossilization, it constituting, at the same time, one of the prerequisites for an unbiased empirical research on the subject..

6. Linguistic scope of fossilization

Although Selinker & Lakshmanan (1993) clearly state that there is no precise list of fossilizable language structures, it is common knowledge that, despite prominence being given to pronunciation, namely the so called "foreign accents", fossilization is expected to occur at phonological, morphological as well as syntactic levels. While foreign accents and examples of bad pronunciation in general are to a greater or lesser extent observable among FL learners irrespective of their L1 background and language, fossilizable language structures at the level of morphology and syntax are more L1 specific, and their frequency of occurrence is likely to differ with respect to the native language of a given FL learner.

To quote the evidence from the studies on fossilization reviewed by Han (2004:114), the morphosyntactic structures that have been labeled as prone to fossilization are the following:

- grammatical gender and third person singular possessive determiners,
- verbal morphology,
- grammatical morphemes such as articles, plurals and prepositions,
- relative clauses,

- adverb placement,
- locative alternation, and
- tense/aspect form-meaning associations.

Aside from verbal morphology, grammatical morphemes and tense/aspect form-meaning associations, which are considered vulnerable to fossilization regardless of the L1 background and origin of FL speakers, the above list testifies to a whole array of language difficulties the English language poses for a given L1-specific group of learners. A distinction drawn between those L1-induced and L1-non-induced facets of fossilization seems to be accounted for L1-L2 similarities and differences within the two language systems. Typically, the language problems the learners and users of English encounter are echoed in the language structures referred to as susceptible to fossilization. Accordingly, grammatical gender and third person singular possessive determiners are subject to fossilization for francophone learners of English. Relative clauses are proved to become most frequently fossilized in the case of Chinese and Japanese learners of English. Adverb placement is prone to fossilization for the French learning English, whereas locative alternation usually undergoes fossilization in the Korean speakers of English.

As regards the Polish learners of English, TL gender forms are estimated to be fossilization-prone on account of the lack of correspondences between L1 and L2 forms in terms of inflections, such as, for instance, in the case of masculine and feminine gender. The same seems to be true of possessive determiners. Apart from different forms Polish and English operate on, the English “its” determiner has no Polish equivalent as such. On similar grounds, articles, plurals and prepositions are subject to fossilization. The first of them do not exist in Polish, the second are governed by dissimilar rules, whereas the last group, being, for example, prepositions of time and place, is realised by different means, and under different circumstances. Particularly troublesome are believed to be the English “in”, “on”, “at”, and “by” prepositions which only vaguely correspond to the locative case in Polish. Although verbal morphology appears to be non-inductive to fossilization, owing to identical L1 and L2 rules of its formation, and corresponding suffixes, word formation as such, operating on a myriad of derivational prefixes and suffixes in both Polish and English. When it comes to relative clauses, the Polish learners of English tend to fossilize at the punctuation level. It is reflected in using commas incorrectly, that is

placing them before relative pronouns, as well as before and after the so called defining/essential information, which, being a rule in Polish, is not at all acceptable in English. Discrepant rules of adverb placement, accordingly, are likely to bring about a fossilised TL word order, among other things, consisting in the use of initial and final adverb positions. Fossilised language structures, on the other hand, are to derive from aspect-form non-correspondences. These are especially significant in the case of English progressive forms constituting the present, or perfect aspect the English language uses to refer to a state resulting from a previous action (also described as a previous action with relevance to a particular time, or a previous action viewed from the perspective of a later time).

Not only does L1 influence fossilization of certain structures, but the target language to which the learners aspire is a decisive factor as well. Therefore, a wide range of structures susceptible to fossilization depends not infrequently on the specificity and complexity of L2, then either impeding or facilitating the process in question. To name a few examples, it is crucial to refer to Han (2004) who brings a preponderance of evidence on the relationship between the L2 item difficulty and its predisposition to fossilize. As it is illustrated in the table below (Table 1.4), the language areas conceived of as difficult to acquire by L2 learners, and thus particularly prone to fossilization, involve word order and case-marking in the case of German being the TL, and, for example, passive constructions or relative clauses posing hardship for L2 learners of English:

Linguistic feature	Target language	L1 group
Subject-verb-object word order	Dutch or German	English
'Easy/Eager to please'	English	French, Arabic, Hebrew
Pronominal reflex of the NP head in a relative clause (c.g., <i>The film was about a boy that he wanted to be free.</i>)	English	Farsi, Arabic
Case-marking (c.g., <i>Jeder Republikaner betrachtete er also sein persönlicher Feind.</i>)	German	Dutch, English
Pseudo-passive (c.g., <i>The books have received.</i>)	English	Chinese, Japanese
Using English progressive duratively (c.g., <i>Day after day he was sweating for his exam.</i>)	English	Dutch
Make + complement (c.g., <i>They might make their friends get very upset about this.</i>)	English	Chinese

Table 1.4 Structures vulnerable to fossilization (adapted from Han 2004: 112)

Apart from the above, Todeva (1992; after Han 2004:116), singles out three linguistic categories at risk of getting fossilized due to the previously-mentioned item difficulty. These are:

- categories lacking a straightforward form-function relationship, e.g. articles,
- semi-productive rules, whose exceptions do not constitute clearly defined sets, e.g. English negative prefixation, and
- units highly arbitrary in nature, such as prepositions or collocations.

What follows Todeva's arguments is Long's (2003: 518) observation that 'morphology would be more vulnerable than syntax, inflections more at risk than free morphemes, and exceptional cases within a language-specific paradigm more problematic than regular ones', at the same time, displaying qualities or, in other words, criteria determining whether a particular language area is fossilization-prone. The qualities under discussion consist in:

- frequency,
- regularity,
- semantic transparency,
- communicative redundancy, and
- perceptual saliency.

Building on Doughty & Williams (1998), susceptibility to fossilization is coincident with language infrequency, irregularity, semantic non-transparency, communicative redundancy, and perceptual non-saliency. Infrequent language forms, as the name suggests, are those seldom or hardly ever used in a given language so no wonder they are troublesome for L2 learners. Such problems may concern, for example, the words like *hypothalamic*, *gyro* or *loss* which, as Arabski (1996b: 136 ff.) claims, are characterised by low frequency. What is also at issue is the so called receptive or deactivated vocabulary. These, following Meara (2004: 139), are words which cannot be retrieved from memory and used productively, and given no input, they will not be activated and efficiently used. When it comes to irregular language items, it is a common practice to observe that unmarked language undergoes fossilization because of its "otherness". Plural forms lacking regularity or irregularities governing comparison of adjectives are to be the examples here. Semantically non-transparent language is expected to fossilize due to its opaque and, many a time, ambiguous nature, reflected in such words as, for example, *turncoat*, *hangdog*, and the like.

Communicatively redundant forms are claimed to be fossilization-prone since they are simply redundant, i.e. their omission does not hinder communication. This can be true of function words like, for instance, 3rd person singular, the omission of which might not seem harmful or disastrous for speakers of English as a FL. Although it may look like that at first sight, this kind of omission is nothing but an example of bad habits indicative of fossilization. Last but not least, perceptually non-salient language forms constitute the source of fossilization as many learners of English as a FL tend to consider them as unimportant. Just to name an example, pronouns, when perceived as non-salient, are used interchangeably and/or not used at all, in either case to the detriment of the language.

Given the hitherto revealed linguistic constellations susceptible to fossilization, the question that arises is whether fossilization is a local or global phenomenon. As of yet, two different viewpoints have been presented and supported in the literature of the subject. Those in favour of fossilization occurring locally, like VanPatten (1988), advance their arguments claiming that only certain linguistic features in certain subsystems of the interlanguages of individual learners are affected. Han (2006: 76) goes even further, arguing that

(...) within a subsystem (e.g. unaccusatives), it is possible that part of it fossilises, and part of it may still be open to change, in a target-like or non-target-like direction.

According to Selinker & Lamendella (1981: 219), ‘(...) the language structure may be differently fossilized at varying degrees of approximation to TL norms’, still leaving aside the features which are successfully acquired or continue to evolve. Such divergent and convergent forces influencing the interlanguage construction have inclined Hawkins (2000; after Han 2006: 48) to speak of *persistent selective fossilization*. Here, persistence is illustrated in the situation in which some aspects of grammar invariably diverge from that of the native speaker, whereas fossilization selectivity stems from the fact that other aspects of learner L2 knowledge do appear to be nativelike.

The opposing views, expounded by, for instance, Tarone et al. (1976), very much approve of global fossilization, which, by definition, influences the entire interlanguage system. While it is relatively easy to prove and establish the former, on the basis of the behavioural evidence of individual learners, it is only feasible to assume the latter, simply because of difficulties in examining the learners’ language globally inclusive of the underlying cognitive processes, and, hence, lack of

substantial evidence. As the aim of the research carried out by the author of this work is to establish concrete evidence of fossilization, the standpoint adopted here is that of local fossilization, deriving from the fact that the extent and degree of fossilized competence depends a great deal on an individual learning L2, and does not affect the whole interlanguage system.

7. Characteristic of advanced language learners and users

Prior to a detailed description of fossilization at the advanced level, as well as language features and tendencies the Polish learners/users of English represent, a short notice should be given to characterise and discriminate between language learners and language users as such, or, termed differently, *incompetent* from *competent language users*. A special emphasis is put on the level of language proficiency and learning objectives the above-mentioned are believed to be distinguished by.

To quote evidence from such studies as Harmer (1997: 11) and Komorowska (1993: 12 ff.), *a competent language user* is very often referred to as a native speaker of a given language, or an advanced foreign language user. An *incompetent language user*, on the other hand, is coterminous with a language learner non-proficient in the (foreign) language.

According to Harmer (1997: 11 ff.), the difference between a competent and incompetent language user lies, broadly speaking, in using the language. By definition, the former uses the language appropriately while the latter does not. To be more precise, to use the language appropriately means to comply with a set of written and unwritten rules. Written rules are compiled, ordered and available as such to any language learner/user in the form of a grammar or reference book. They are totally explicit, and constitute the point of reference for anyone who needs it. By contrast, the unwritten ones are implicit and hard to grasp as they derive from the linguistic intuition attributed to the native speakers of the language exclusively. Be it written or unwritten “language rules” determining the appropriate language use, they cover

- pronunciation,
- grammar, and
- lexis.

To know the language with respect to pronunciation, denotes being familiarized with *sounds* representative of a given language, the role of *stress* and *intonation*. These, in

turn, give rise to the issue of fluency and being fluent in the TL, it being defined by Leeson (1975: 136) as ‘ the ability of the speakers to produce indefinitely many sentences conforming [among other things] to the phonological exigencies of a given natural language’.

In relation to grammar, there exists a rule-based grammatical system. This consists of a finite number of rules which allow for an infinite number of sentences to be created.

As far as vocabulary is concerned, to know a lexical item indicates, first of all, being aware of its *meaning*, *word use*, *word formation*, and *word grammar* (see Figure 1.1).

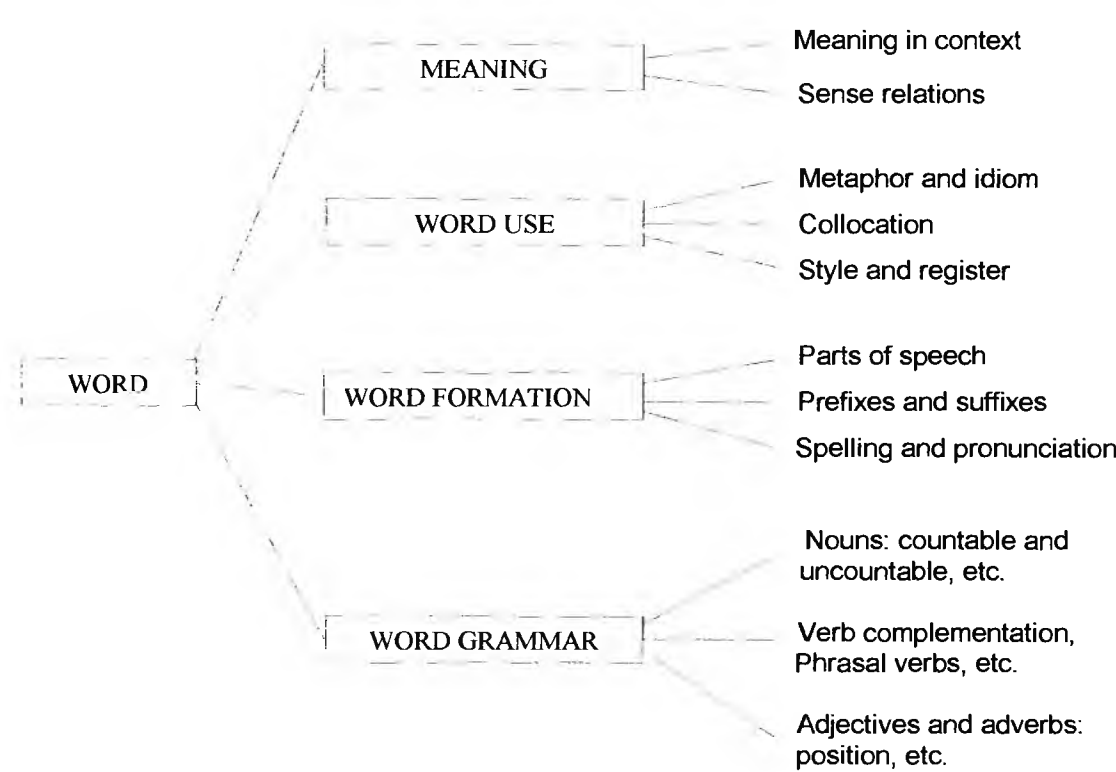


Fig. 1 1. Knowing a word (after Harmer 1997:158)

As can readily be seen from the figure, to know the meaning of a given word entails being familiar with the meaning(s) and sense relations the word takes on in a given context. Word use refers to the knowledge concerning such aspects as word combinability and style, as well as register. Word formation, as the name indicates, gives information on how to produce words, covering morphology, punctuation and pronunciation rules. Finally, word grammar centres upon syntax, placing a special

emphasis on particular parts of the sentence, the position they take, and function they perform in a given string of the language.

Secondly, there are different kinds of lexical items, the knowledge of which determines the level of language proficiency. As Lewis (1993: 91 ff.) singles out, to the most basic ones refer:

- word(s),
- multi-word item(s),
- polyword(s),
- collocation(s), and
- institutionalised expression(s).

Impressive as the learner's definitions of polywords as multi-word phrases admitting no variability interchangeable with single words or concepts, and/or examples of institutionalised expressions, such as salt and pepper may be, it has been rightly proved that neither grammatical nor extended lexical knowledge seems to be sufficient to be regarded a competent language user. Put in Chomskyan terms, it is not language *competence* (knowledge), but language *performance* (the realization of this knowledge) that enables a language user to be efficient and successful in the language.

Successful language performance is largely determined by the level of *communicative competence* a FL learner/user displays. The very concept, to quote Brown (1987: 199), touches upon 'that aspect of [the language learner/user] competence that enables [him/her] to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts'. Consequently, to demonstrate a well-developed communicative competence stands for having developed its four interrelated constituents. They are as follows:

- *grammatical competence*, i.e. previously mentioned rules, specifically that of morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology,
- *discourse competence* construed as the ability to connect sentences into logical and meaningful stretches of discourse,
- *sociolinguistic competence* rendered as socio-cultural rules specific to a given language and discourse, such as roles of the participants, the information shared, and the function of the interaction in a given context, and
- *strategic competence*, which reflects knowing how to use the language rather than knowing about it, namely the ability to access and process both verbal

and non-verbal communication strategies on the verge of communication breakdowns.

More recently, however, in his discussion on language competences, Gozdawa-Golebiowski (2004: 26) has proposed yet another component, notably that of *collocational competence*. This one is believed to be of direct relevance in the course of speaking as it enables the language user to access and retrieve sequences of lexical items in a holistic way, with no focus being given on their particular constituents. The same seems to be true of *metaphorical competence* (Gabryś 2002), which, when well-developed by the learner, allows for recognising processes as a whole and, thus, conceptualising figurative language.

Last but not least, a competent language user is the one who has mastered *language skills (or macro skills)* and *sub-skills (or micro skills)*. The former constitute speaking, writing, listening, and reading displayed by the language user on separate occasions, or a combination of skills used at the same time. As regards the latter, however, the case in point is the skills for processing the language used, and the one the users are exposed to. Just to name a few examples, in order to use the skill of reading what is essential is the sub-skill of reading for gist or reading for detailed understanding.

Much as has been dwelled on the person of a competent language user, it is crucial to redress the balance between competent and incompetent language user, and proceed to the latter one, describing the goals the incompetent language users/ (foreign) language learners strive for in learning the FL.

On the basis of Komorowska (1993: 14), the long-term goals in learning and using a FL take on the form of the following list of learner abilities to:

- distinguish between sounds of a given language,
- produce these sounds,
- tell the difference between different kinds of word and sentence stress,
- use different kinds of stress,
- discriminate between the rhythm and intonation patterns, and be aware of the difference in meaning they cause,
- produce correct rhythm and intonation patterns, and change meaning by using them in a variety of ways,
- understand individual lexical items (passive vocabulary),
- use the words properly (active vocabulary),

- know grammar rules, which make it possible to create and understand correct sentences in a given language,
- use four language skills,
- produce open and flow conversation,
- vary the speech according to the context, and
- know the socio-cultural norms governing communication.

In this view, most of the onus falls on phonology which, as has already been pointed out, constitutes a condition *sine qua non* for achieving a total mastery of the FL in speaking. What follows are the remaining two language subsystems, namely the learner's endeavours to get familiarized with lexis and grammar. Also to be considered are the learner's attempts to use all four language skills, conversational devices and socio-cultural norms. On closer examination, it is immediately apparent that a strong correlation exists between learner goals and components of communicative competence, such as, for example, a direct correspondence between language subsystems and grammatical competence, conversational devices and strategic competence, as well as socio-cultural norms and sociolinguistic competence.

According to Ellis, (1985; after Gabryś-Barker 2005: 33), the language goals to be reached by incompetent language users are two-fold. More specifically, to build on Zajac (2004:8), they are oriented around achieving *declarative* and *procedural* knowledge (Figure 1.2), also known as *savoir* and *savoir-faire* respectively.

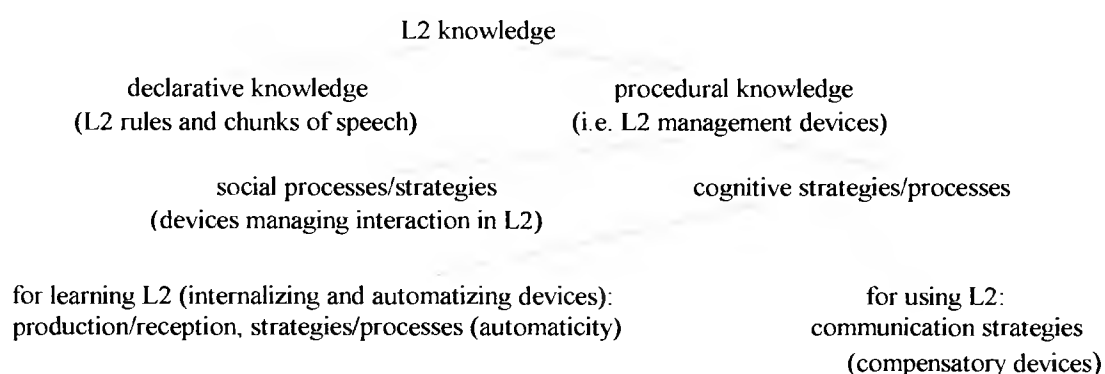


Fig. 1.2. L2 knowledge of a learner (Gabryś-Barker 2005: 33)

A major contribution both types of knowledge make to the learning process can be derived from the definition offered by Anderson (1995; after Multhaup 1998: 74), according to whom

declarative knowledge is explicit knowledge that we can report and of which we are consciously aware. Procedural knowledge is knowledge of how to do things, and it is often implicit (...).

Simply put, the former one encompasses, as it was in the case of Chomskyan competence, the knowledge about the language, its rules, mechanisms and devices, fairly implicit in the case of L1 and predominantly explicit in FL. The latter, on the other hand, comprises the knowledge on how to produce/use the language, putting all the language devices into effort, analogously to earlier-stated performance.

Viewing learning goals from the perspective of language production, much focus is paid on attaining Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) by the learner. The very distinction put forward by Cummins (1981) has inclined Brown (1987: 199) to emphasize the fact that the former covers the communicative capacity needed in daily interpersonal exchanges, whereas the latter covers ‘that dimension of proficiency in which the learner manipulates or reflects upon the surface features of language outside of the immediate interpersonal context’.

Irrespective of the assumptions behind the (foreign) language learning objectives and learning goals as such, a broad spectrum of abilities and types of knowledge to be attained invariably reflects a well-developed linguistic competence, as well as communicative efficiency so important in daily-life encounters. The extent to which the abilities in focus are developed depends a great deal on the level of proficiency achieved by an individual. This, in turn, reaches a varying degree of development on the interlanguage continuum.

As far as the very advanced language learners and users are concerned, a previously-mentioned dichotomy, existing between the person of a language learner and language user on the grounds of differing levels of language appropriateness they represent, loses its significance. Apparently, the two are believed to manifest the same level of appropriateness in the language used, no matter if it is a FL learner, FL user or FL teacher who produces the TL. Following M. Wysocka (1996: 166), FL learners are FL users, FL users are FL learners, and even FL teachers are FL users who ‘never stop being FL learners’. On the basis of these arguments, the terms “advanced language learner” and “advanced language user” are synonymous in terms of the level of their competences, and are to be used interchangeably in the present study unless a distinction is drawn between a FL learner and a FL teacher. If this is the case, FL teachers maintain dominance over advanced language learners/users in *professional competence* worked on among the representatives of the former group.

Professional competence, briefly speaking, entails all abilities the person of a teacher exhibits. Its development starts with the onset of the teaching career and finishes when leaving the post of the teacher. In his definition of the concept of professional competence, Wallace (1997: 58), remarks on ‘a moving target or horizon, towards which professionals travel all their professional life but which is never finally attained’. This one resembles the path FL learners follow to achieve the impossible, i.e. the absolute mastery of the FL.

8. Fossilization in Polish advanced language learners and users

The exact level of proficiency the advanced language learners/users reach on the IL continuum is discussed in terms of the level and quality of language competence the above-mentioned represent.

In her study of regress the Polish advanced learners/users of English as a FL perceive in their language competence, Gabrys-Barker (2003: 115 ff.) reports on students’ strengths and weaknesses induced by the programme of the studies they attend. On the whole, the learners notice slow progress or lack of it in their learning process, and, more often than not, comment on signs of language attrition. Generally speaking, insufficient and low fluency tends to be observed among students focusing on content courses, and those preoccupied with writing their thesis in the selected field of interest. Unsurprisingly, lack of opportunities to practise and use the language increases the learners’ confidence in language accuracy and declarative knowledge.

Indicative of fossilization as decrement in general language competence may be, it is language skills and language subsystems that are expected to offer more intriguing hints about language progression and regression, and, consequently, reveal a mayriad of the potential triggers of fossilization.

Language skills, according to Ringbom (1993: 295), can be attained by advanced learners of the FL to a varying degree.

Reading skills are claimed to be easily learnt. On the basis of a certain threshold level of general language competence, automatization of reading processes on the level of word, sentence, and the whole text is likely to guarantee near native-like proficiency. This is particularly true of those advanced language learners/users who find reading skills very well-mastered and far from being attrited.

What poses problems is listening comprehension. It should come as no surprise since the mastery of listening skills can only be finally reached in the natural

environment, being exposed to the varieties of language spoken in the TLC. Devoid of such possibilities, the students rate listening as the lowest and least-developed on the near-nativeness scale.

When it comes to speaking, it is considered to be extremely difficult for non-native speakers. It is common experience to recognise advanced learners/users of FL by hyper-correctness, reflecting their focus on accuracy, or lack of pragmatic knowledge, leading to a communication breakdown.

The most demanding and challenging is writing. This particular language skill is equally complex for native and non-native speakers as it involves a wide range of abilities, registers, discourse markers, and appropriate structure, among other things. On the basis of the results obtained by Piasecka (2004: 197), there seems to be no question that a chief obstacle advanced learners encounter in writing is complexity and intricacy of academic discourse, also referred to as Academic English or English for Academic Purposes. By definition, it involves, as Piasecka (2004: 194) explains, 'a range of academic discourses that vary across disciplines, comprise a number of genres, satisfy specific communicative purposes and display the use of typical rhetorical conventions and characteristics.' In her study, which took on the form of a detailed analysis of diploma papers written by the students, Piasecka (2004: 197 ff.) observed four types of difficulties the subjects experienced. They comprised :

- content knowledge problems (problems with structuring, ordering, and finding relations between the concepts)
- writing process knowledge problems (departing from the subject, and problems connected with following the style selected for a diploma paper)
- context knowledge problems (problems with reading other academic discourse texts)
- language system knowledge problems (problems with word order, articles, word formation, and word choice).

The first of the problems signalled by Piasecka (2004) seems to arise from the lack of learners' content and form awareness. As a result, the learners change sentence structures not knowing about changes made in the pragmatic value of the discourse. Cases like that are referred to as parallelism problems, observed by Zalewski (1996: 72) in learners' inability to express and combine content with equivalent language forms. This, consequently, is likely to be responsible for learners' topic avoidance and problems with the correct wording as well as proper style. The difficulties are

intensified when the TL learners/users suffer from the “minimum exposure” to academic texts and/or do not read them at all. Problems with grammar and lexis, on the other hand, can be accounted for the so called syntactic and lexical monotony, manifested via limited syntactic and lexical resources respectively. In this view, the level of language (non)development has again proved to be influenced by the content of the course, responsible for the students’ knowledge about the language, and language context the students are provided with, in charge of the proper style and register.

The most frequently reported difficulties in writing, as well as those Polish advanced users of English come across in other language skills are illustrated in the following table:

Language skill	Difficulties
listening comprehension	<i>speed, varied accents, varieties of English, linking, weak forms</i>
reading comprehension	<i>concentration on longer texts, vocabulary, idioms, colloquial language, complex syntax</i>
speaking	<i>inhibition, stress, lack of fluency, register (style), pronunciation, intonation</i>
writing	<i>spelling, style (formal versus informal), coherence, structure, punctuation, L1 transfer (style, syntax, structure), articles</i>

Table 1.5. Difficulties in language skills (after Gabryś-Barker 2003: 119)

Clearly, the pace at which the input is delivered to the students in listening comprehension tasks has been considered extremely troublesome among the group examined. The magnitude of the problem increases together with varied accents, non-standard varieties of English, and difficulties linking words, weak forms and elisions pose. As regards reading, the students report on problems with concentration, especially on longer texts. Additionally, they encounter difficulties rooted in the very lexical subsystem, covering collocations and colloquialisms. When it comes to speaking, inhibition and stress seem to be responsible for students’ failure in oral performance, or even, in some cases, lead to their reluctance to speak and/or communication avoidance. In the course of speaking, however, the hardships students experience derive from lack of fluency, making it impossible for them to

successfully convey and comprehend the message. Aside from this, the students encounter style, pronunciation and intonation problems. Style tends to be equally problematic in writing. Here, the students are reported to have difficulties primarily with language formality and informality, as well as coherence and structure. The latter can be L1 transfer-induced, taking on the form of L1 style and word order. Last but not least, the students are known to display punctuation inaccuracy, produce spelling mistakes, and admit to having problems with articles in their language production.

Apart from the above, a mass of evidence proves that mistakes and errors of performance do occur and are clearly evident at the advanced level. Building on Gabryś-Barker (2003: 121), the incorrect language forms produced by her subjects reflect typical mistakes committed by Polish learners of English (Table 1.6):

Language level	Systematic errors	Occasional/surprising errors
a. phonological	<i>minimal pairs diphthongs stress (verb vs noun) voiced vs voiceless "th"</i>	none
b. grammatical	<i>articles (over underuse) present perfect tense (overuse) irregular verb forms simplification "wish "</i>	<i>"-s" 3rd person sg (!) questions (inversion, indirect questions), sequence of tenses, word order, tenses in general</i>
c. lexical	<i>lack of active vocabulary, informal vs formal lexis</i>	<i>cognates (L1 transfer)</i>

Table 1 6 Errors in language subsystems (adapted from Gabryś-Barker 2003: 121)

As it emerges from the table, the advanced level students have a propensity to commit a number of systematic errors within the area of phonology. The language problems the students arrive at at this particular point tend to be grounded in L1-L2 distant phonological subsystems, i.e. different consonant, vowel and diphthong systems, different word stress rules, and “th” sound existence in L2. As far as grammatical mistakes are concerned, both systematic and non-systematic errors are observed. Those occurring systematically involve over and/or underuse of articles, overuse of the present perfect tense, simplification of irregular verb forms, and “wish” structure. Again, the difficulties the students face can be accounted for L1-L2 differences, such as different tense, mood and aspect system, as well as non-existence of articles as such in Polish. Similarly, the language problems the advanced users of English are beset with occasionally stem from L1-L2 discrepancies, and,

many a time, consist of wrong word order, irrespective of tense and sentence type. L1 transfer is clearly evident in the case of lexis, and contributes to those mistakes which appear non-systematically in the students' interlanguage. The most problematic are cognates, ill-formed or ill-combined by the students. The obstacles the advanced level students come across on a regular basis have their source in lack of active vocabulary, and gaps in their linguistic repertoire, both in terms of the formal and informal language style.

The findings Gabryś-Barker (2003) obtained concord neatly with the results of earlier studies investigating the nature of interlanguage of the Polish advanced language learners of English, some of the most representative examples of which constitute works by Zabor (2001), Gabryś (2001), Porzuczek (1999, 1996), M. Wysocka (1989) and Arabski (1979).

As regards phonology, Porzuczek (1996: 37) presents a list of the most common mistakes the Polish advanced learners commit in the recognition of individual vowels and diphthongs.

VOWEL / DIPHTHONG RECOGNITION	
CORRECT RESPONSES	MOST COMMON ERRORS
<i>/i:/</i> – 79.6%	<i>/i/</i> = 12.6%
<i>/ɪ/</i> – 95.5%	
<i>/e/</i> – 69.8%	<i>/æ/</i> – 11.9%, <i>/ə/</i> – 5.6%, <i>/ɜ:/</i> – 3.9%
<i>/æ/</i> – 51.2%	<i>/ʌ/</i> – 13.8%, <i>/ɑ:/</i> – 12.5%, <i>/e/</i> – 5.9%, <i>/əʊ/</i> – 3.8%
<i>/ʌ/</i> – 62.6%	<i>/ɒ/</i> – 7.6%, <i>/ɑ:/</i> – 6.9%, <i>/aʊ/</i> – 5.9%, <i>/æ/</i> – 3.1%
<i>/ɑ:/</i> – 66.3%	<i>/ʌ/</i> – 15.0%, <i>/aʊ/</i> – 7.4%
<i>/ɒ/</i> – 67.0%	<i>/ɔ:/</i> – 17.9%, <i>/əʊ/</i> – 7.0%
<i>/ɔ:/</i> – 82.2%	<i>/ɒ/</i> – 4.5%, <i>/u:/</i> – 3.5%
<i>/ʊ/</i> – 69.8%	<i>/u:/</i> – 23.5%
<i>/u:/</i> – 58.1%	<i>/ʊ/</i> – 28.6%
<i>/ɜ:/</i> – 54.8%	<i>/eə/</i> – 8.0%, <i>/əʊ/</i> – 6.4%, <i>/ɔ:/</i> – 5.4%, <i>/æ/</i> – 2.9%
<i>/ɪə/</i> – 50.9%	<i>/ɪ/</i> – 20.8%, <i>/i:/</i> – 18.1%, <i>/eə/</i> – 2.7%
<i>/eə/</i> – 20.4%	<i>/e/</i> – 28.9%, <i>/æ/</i> – 28.9%, <i>/ɜ:/</i> – 11.3%, <i>/əʊ/</i> – 3.1%
<i>/eɪ/</i> – 81.4%	<i>/æ/</i> – 7.5%, <i>/əʊ/</i> – 3.4%
<i>/aɪ/</i> – 91.9%	
<i>/aʊ/</i> – 57.6%	<i>/ʌ/</i> – 16.6%, <i>/ɑ:/</i> – 10.5%, <i>/æ/</i> – 5.1%
<i>/ɔɪ/</i> – 81.3%	<i>/əʊ/</i> – 2.8%
<i>/ʊə/</i> – 18.9%	<i>/ɔ:/</i> – 35.4%, <i>/u:/</i> – 17.4%, <i>/ʊ/</i> – 8.7%
<i>/əʊ/</i> – 87.0%	

Table 1.7. Phonological errors (from Porzuczek 1996: 37)

As seen from the above, the most problematic are the cases in which several English vowels or diphthongs share one Polish counterpart (e.g. */e/*, */æ/*, */eə/*; */aʊ/*, */ɑ:/*, */ʊə/*,

or /ʌ/ and /ɑ:/). Other regularities observed prove that low vowels (e.g. /æ/) tend to be more difficult to identify than high ones, such as /i:/ or /u:/; whereas back (e.g. /u:/) and central (/ə/) vowels are more troublesome than front ones (e.g. /i:/). Problems with both rounded (/æ/) and unrounded (/ʊ/ or /u:/) sounds appear. Falling diphthongs, such as /ʊə/ are more demanding than rising ones (e.g. /əʊ/), the learners' perception of the former being impaired to a great extent. Problems in production, on the other hand, apart from the aforesaid lack of exact sound counterparts, arise from places and manners of articulation which vary from one language to another. Here, the biggest discrepancies are seen among consonants. Given no correspondences as such, /θ/ or /ŋ/ are regarded to be one of the most difficult sounds to articulate.

When it comes to lexis, there is a sufficient body of evidence testifying to enormous difficulties the Polish learners of English encounter with respect to idioms, metaphors, collocations and the so called “culturally loaded” terms. The source of the problems is L1 transfer. Idioms, to build on Zabor (2001: 171), are ‘non-transferable structures’. In addition to it, they are, more often than not, semantically non-transparent, which translates into their non-translatability. The same seems to be true of metaphoric expressions. Not only are their language-specific, but also equally troublesome for the Polish language learners/users. Collocations, though seemingly easier, are rendered in the form of calques from L1 to L2. Culturally loaded terms, on the other hand, are both L1 language and culture-specific. The problems they pose to FL learners, mostly evident in stereotypical, outdated or even “frozen” vocabulary, to paraphrase Gabryś (2001: 48) can be accounted for different associations L1 and TL speakers have.

The research undertaken by M. Wysocka (1989: 76 ff.) has demonstrated a magnitude of the problems (phonological, lexical, fluency-related and grammatical ones) encountered by advanced learners of English as a FL in spoken and written discourses. As regards the spoken language, the errors of performance systematically committed by the students involve:

- over and underuse of articles,
- misuse of prepositions,
- misuse of regular and irregular comparison of adjectives,
- problems with word order (e.g. lack of inversion),

- problems with word formation (e.g. wrong prefixes and suffixes),
- underuse of passivity,
- problems with word stress,
- wrong sentence stress,
- wrong intonation,
- overuse of fillers,
- incoherence,
- limited range of conversation management devices, and
- use of hesitation sounds typical of the Polish language.

As hinted at above, the majority of the errors oscillate around grammar. They cover the field of syntax and morphology, preponderance given to articles, prepositions, word order and word formation. Slightly less “popular” are language inadequacies underlying phonology. Here, the errors range from wrong word and sentence stress to intonational aspects. Thirdly, a substantial body of evidence of learners’ inability to express themselves in the FL has been demonstrated. This is manifested by the use of fillers, incoherent utterances, poor conversation management devices and hesitation sounds typical of Polish. Diversified as the error manifestations are, they all pertain to the level of communicative competence which is far from being perfect. What is more, they testify to poor grammatical, discourse and strategic components the very competence rests on.

The written texts, in virtually all instances, concur with the data presented above. Common to speaking and writing seem to be difficulties with articles, prepositions, word order, comparison of adjectives, and word formation. Additionally, though, a vast number of incorrect language forms produced in writing has been recorded. The errors consist in:

- that-clause difficulties,
- misuse and overuse of linking words, especially the word *because*, and
- linguistic informality.

As was the case with the oral performance, grammatical aspects seem to lag behind and leave much to be desired. This can be explained by insufficient practice, and/or knowledge of a particular grammar rule or, simply, lack of students’ attention to form.

A further example of linguistic inadequacies in the form of the written production comes from the research by Arabski (1979: 32 ff.). In his analysis of the written interlanguage, the learners at the advanced level show a propensity to produce errors mostly at lexical and grammatical levels (Table 1.8). The language problems are, above all, manifest in semantics, morphology and syntax:

Language level	
a) lexis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – word coinage errors – lack of semantic precision – lack of differentiation between styles and registers
b) grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – prepositions – articles (mostly additions and substitutions) – articles – pronouns – tense, mood and their forms – word order (specifically adverbials of place and time, and indirect questions given the order of direct ones) – word formation (e.g. adverb and adjective endings)

Table 1.8. Written errors at the advanced level

To be more specific, semantic problems at the level of the lexical subsystem reflect students’ failure to precisely conceptualise their thoughts. Wrong word usage results from their inability to differentiate between language style and register whereas wrong morphological word forms are caused by students’ ignorance of any word coinage rules. Grammatical dimension, on the other hand, is strongly represented by preposition, article and pronoun problems. Usually, syntactic difficulties arise when the students are confronted with tense and mood forms. Moreover, they produce wrongly-ordered sentences, and build ill-formed language items.

Given the occurrence of written errors at the advanced level, Arabski (1979: 45 ff.) speaks of decreasing and increasing tendencies of errors the Polish learners of English commit. Tendencies in learning/using English as FL he observes are classified into those displaying a propensity to decrease, increase and then decrease, as well as those which tend to increase in the IL development. The first group is represented by:

- the appearance of Polish words,
- errors caused by morphological similarity in L1,

- errors caused by graphic and/or phonetic similarity in L2,
- errors in the usage of hyponyms instead of more precise terms,
- omission of prepositions and lapses, and
- omission of “the” article.

Generally speaking, a decreasing tendency of errors gives evidence of increasing linguistic competence. Basing on the areas of language advancement presented above, it is apparent that the students progress in L2 vocabulary, both in terms of word form and word use, L2 prepositions, manifested in their performance, and definite articles regularly attempted at in their language production.

The category of increasing – decreasing errors constitute:

- the errors caused by the application of primary counterparts and
- word coinage errors.

Here, the changes on the interlanguage continuum are particularly visible. Initially, the errors are produced on a massive scale, and, successively, decrease with students’ linguistic awareness and competence. The progress in question, however, is out of the question visible in the third classification, which involves the increasing tendency errors, such as:

- semantic similarity errors,
- omission of the indefinite article,
- omission of genitive and demonstrative articles,
- overuse of “the” article,
- underdifferentiation among definitive, genitive, and demonstrative articles, and
- errors caused by transfer from acquired L2 constructions.

As morphological, graphic and/or phonetic similarity can be overcome and reduced, semantic similarity errors escalate in the course of IL development. When it comes to articles, although the omission of “the” article decreases, its overuse is intensified and so is the omission of indefinite articles in general. Further on, the omission of genitive and demonstrative articles becomes strongly evident. What occurs in large numbers is underdifferentiation among definitive, genitive and demonstrative articles. Last but not least, the negative intralingual transfer persists and is hugely influential in the structure construction.

Viewed from the perspective of a native speaker of English, the most persistent language tendencies, and, thus, most irritating mistakes the Polish users of English make in their performance are the most basic ones. To quote Davis (2003: 26 ff.), the most common mistakes comprise:

- omission of 3rd person singular “s” ending,
- omission of definite and indefinite articles,
- misconstruction of continuous tenses,
- false friends, and
- misuse and lack of differentiation between countable and uncountable nouns.

Compared with the results of the studies carried out by Polish researchers, Davis’ (2003) observations overlap in at least three cases, i.e. the “s” ending, article and tense problems. They seem to be justified on the grounds of L1-L2 differences, giving rise to grammatically-incorrect utterances in L2. This lack of L1-L2 correspondence is also resultative of the mistakes caused by the so called problem words, i.e. those which are seemingly similar in English and Polish. Some of the most hilarious words for the native ear are “nervous” used in the same way as “zdenerwowany” in Polish, “manifestation” standing for “demonstration”, or “second” instead of “other”. What appears particularly problematic within the noun category is its countability and uncountability. To name a few examples, Poles are claimed to often talk about getting “*informations” or “*advices” instead of some information and pieces of advice. Even more difficult are those words which in Polish are always countable, but in English can be both countable and uncountable, like “possibility” or “opportunity”.

Irrespective of the researchers and studies conducted, the error occurrences and tendencies discussed above can be offered a common explanation worded as lack of mastery, language ignorance or the pretence of it, and/or language regression on the part of advanced language users. As a vast majority of the erroneous forms are those which never or seldom appeared incorrectly at earlier stages of learning the language, they constituted the language forms deeply ingrained in learners’ memory, the rules of which were internalized a long time ago. A further explanation for the status quo can be attributed to the learners’ *problem of access* to the information, rule or specific language property at the moment of production. This, hypothetically, can be caused by, for instance, *over-learning*, *un-learning* or *forgetting* processes.

Overlearning of one structure blocks access to another. Unlearning is expected to result in inappropriate language production. Forgetting, on the other hand, is, more often than not, blamed for rule and structure “extinction”, as well as lack of production leading to regression. Language regression in the case of FL teachers, according to M. Wysocka (1999a: 426), is claimed to result from *unnatural communication* teachers regularly take part in within the classroom context. To be more exact, unnatural communication is established by three interrelated constituents, and, at the same time, determinants of the classroom environment:

- 1) limited language coverage, owing to teaching material and syllabus constraints,
- 2) repetitiveness of the whole learning-teaching process, meaning repetitive actions taken and fixed course contents covered, and
- 3) exposure to learners’ erratic language.

The first one brings about fragmentarity of knowledge presented to FL learners, and artificiality of language use available in the classroom. The second factor leads to boredom and routinised behaviours on the part of both FL learners and teachers. And, finally, the third constituent, for obvious reasons, results in erratic and attrited teacher language. Of course, the extent of language regress varies, and largely depends on a combination of factors determining the quality of the FL, and diagnosing it as fossilization-affected or fossilization-free. To list a few, learning and teaching experiences, attitude to the learning and teaching process per se, and, most importantly, individual ways of maintaining and/ or developing one’s linguistic competence.

9. Recapitulation

Drawing together all the information presented throughout this chapter, the following summary of the most important issues focused on can be offered:

First of all, the concept of fossilization has been accounted for cognitively, neuro-biologically, psychologically, socio-affectively and environmentally. Bearing in mind the age, proficiency level, and learning context that define the controls of the present study, the most significant seem neuro-biological and environmental views on fossilization. The interplay of the two “forces”, represented by maturation constraints on the one hand, and the lack of input, instruction and corrective feedback on the other, brings about a marked slowdown in the process of (inter)language

development, thereby, providing a sound basis for the author of the thesis to research fossilization.

Secondly, it appears that the phenomenon of fossilization has not only reached a detailed scientific explanation, but it has also been given myriads of interpretations, each pointing to its dynamic character. The fact that the level of fossilization differs from one language dimension to another pinpoints idiosyncrasy and selectivity the very process is marked by. Both dynamism and nomadism of fossilised language features have influenced the choice and implementation of methodology in the current research, it being an asynchronic longitudinal approach.

A variety of definitions provided has revealed a wide linguistic scope of fossilization, affecting both spoken and written mode of language. When it comes to the former, language accuracy and fluency are violated. In the latter case, however, inaccuracies and instances of text incoherence as such are observed. Approaches to the process in focus have also allowed the author of the work to approve of a distinction between erroneous and non-erroneous fossilization, manifested, in broader terms, via language errors and correct language forms respectively. Errors are most frequently occurring at grammatical, lexical, morphological, phonological, spelling and punctuation levels, whereas non-erroneous fossilization is coterminous with an excessive use of pre-fabricated patterns and routinised expressions.

As outlined beforehand, the problem of language regression does occur among advanced learners/users of English as a FL. Most frequently, the difficulties reported on in the research literature range from the level of general language competence to language skills and language subsystems. Here, speaking seems to be more troublesome than writing, while phonology is believed to pose bigger problems to FL learners/users than grammar and lexis altogether.

Also, as hinted at above, the extent of fossilization has proved to vary from one individual to another. However, taking into account such factors as, for instance, classroom environment, constant exposure to incorrect learners' language or limited coverage of the teaching materials, both the Polish learners and teachers are at serious risk of their competence getting fossilised. The probability of fossilization is even greater when it is the teacher who offers faulty language to his/her students, and is devoid of sensitivity to both the language input and output received within the FL setting. The greater the likelihood of fossilization, though, the stronger the need to investigate it.

CHAPTER II

ASPECTS OF FOSSILIZATION

1. Introduction

The hereby presented aspects of fossilization are placed in the context of the process of learning and using a language. Starting with a characteristic of fossilization in the native language, a distinction between the so called fossilised second language acquisition and second language learning follows, an emphasis being put on fossilization indicators in either case. What is given focal attention, however, is the place of fossilization in the process of (inter)language development, the effects the very phenomenon bears on the quality of language competence, and changes the construct in question undergoes with time.

2. Fossilization in native language

In a debate on whether the scope of fossilization precludes or includes the native language forms, Adams and Ross-Feldman (2003) claim that fossilization is not exclusively proprietary to learners. The statement that both learner (non-native) and native grammars get fossilised derives from their research comparing English non-native and native speakers in terms of consistency of grammatical judgements. The results of the study showed that the responses natives and non-natives produced in grammaticality judgement tests were equally indeterminate, inconsistent and unstable, however, differential with respect to the language areas examined. The source of differences between the extent of native and non-native (in)stability was explored by Sorace (1996: 385 ff.), and illustrated within the following regularities:

Native judgements are likely to be indeterminate when the structures in question are highly marked or very subtle syntactic properties. Compared to natives, late L2 learners tend to exhibit relatively greater stability in these “squishy” areas of English, on which the grammar of English is fluid, and where judgements often take into consideration presumed forms, prescriptivism, hyper-correctness, stylistic register, and other variables that are not strictly grammatical in nature

Typically “English” as the above-presented tendencies are, the language behaviours in question are common to any language and any language user(s). So is the division between native and non-native grammars.

Native grammars, to be more precise, can be represented by two different types of language users, that is the so called “unmarked” and “marked” ones. The criterion of (un)markedness refers here to the language(s) used by those under investigation, the native language exclusively in the first case, and the native plus foreign language(s) in the second. In the context of the Polish language, for example, the former group comprises those native speakers of Polish who finished their formal instruction in the very language at the primary or secondary school level, never learning and/or using foreign languages. The second type, on the other hand, seems to be best described as covering those Polish native speakers who continued their Polish education at the academic level when studying foreign languages, e.g. the English Department at the University of Silesia provides the first year students with two semesters of the Polish classes, and/or declare themselves competent FL users. Despite the differences between language experiences and language backgrounds the two “parties” are characterised by, both of them are equally susceptible to L1 fossilization. The source of the problems, among other things, lies in the environment, and language contact(s) marked and unmarked language users come into on a daily basis. The first of them, moving mainly in the family and work circles, and being exposed to mostly TV and Internet language, are, more often than not, expected to absorb inappropriate language forms. The situation results in getting into the habit of saying * *poszłem*, * *wyszłem*, or * *wzięłem*, which happens to be the norm in their environment, in the Internet jargon, and appears in such TV programmes as *Streetcharts* (VIVA Polska). Being unaware of language habits they form one way or another, they are unaware of changes in their language competence, and do not realise how fossilised it already is. When it comes to the marked speakers of Polish, on the other hand, it is not as much the lack of contact with the model Polish language as it is the exposure to the foreign language that distorts their L1 competence. This involves an intensive use of the FL both in the classroom/academic context and in the outside-school environment, the practice of which intensifies and increases with every single visit to the TLC. It is very often the case that this group of Polish native speakers not only reads and writes in the TL, but also uses it when speaking more often than L1. Apart from the advantage the FL takes over the native one in terms of the frequency of use, it is similarities and differences between the two language grammars that contribute to and constitute the mechanisms responsible for the formation of “bad language habits”. One of the most common examples

deriving from the discrepancies between the English (i.e. the FL) and Polish (L1) language systems is the realization of wrong noun inflections in the latter (e.g. * Nie mam *szaliku* or **roweru*) on account of the lack of case correspondences between the two. Equally “popular” seem fossilised language calques or anglicisms, the former evident in the sentence like * *Szoklam się* (the English version being *I got shocked*), the latter exemplified in * *Ona okazała się być lepsza* (transferred from *She turned out to be better*).

Either of the afore-listed “language misbehaviours” are typical of the non-native grammars or, to put it differently, non-native speakers of Polish. These constitute the third type of the Polish language users, namely those learning and/or using Polish as a FL. Although the language difficulties they suffer from differ as to the source language and language background, general tendencies observed among the advanced learners and users of Polish as a FL are mainly purely ungrammatical in character. Divided into two categories, subsumed under the headings of the most and least frequent occurrences respectively, they are, in either case, symptomatic of fossilization. The former, i.e. the most often reported ungrammaticalities, cover the following language areas:

- prepositions, e.g. **Kupię na pani kawę*, **Idę do poczty*.
- pronouns, e.g. **Tamte mężczyźni*, **Widzę się z ją*.
- case, e.g. **Ona ma duży pies*, **Potrzebuję krzesło*.
- word order, e.g. **Bardzo podoba się mi*, **To jest kot gruby*.
- tense, e.g. **Tomek wczoraj ogląda film*.
- aspect, e.g. **Będę napisać*, **Jutro ona będzie kupić książkę*.
- verb inflections, e.g. **bylimy*, **jestemy*.
- verb conjugation, e.g. **kupowuje*, **gotowywać*.
- adjective comparison, e.g. **bardziej lepsz*, **bliższy*, **zdrowiejszy*.
- plural forms, e.g. **człowieki*, **dziecka*, **studenty*, **profesory*.
- collocations, e.g. **robić sport*, **wziąć zdjęcie*, **mieć prysznic*.
- prefixes, e.g. **przyprać pranie*.
- suffixes, e.g. **inteligentność*.
- pronunciation, e.g. the word “cera” realised as /**kera* .
- intonation, e.g. division of words into syllables.
- spelling, e.g. lack of discrimination between the words *kość* and *kosić*.

In trying to find the reasons for high frequency the above-enumerated are characterised by in the case of the Polish language, it is L1-L2 distance and disparities that give rise to language problems of that kind. To name a few, the situations in which the mother tongue is devoid of the category of tense, case or verb inflections, such as Chinese, translate into inaccuracies in all these language spheres. In the case of reverse situations, that is circumstances under which L1-specific features influence TL performance, the resultant Polish forms are based on and build of non-existent features. For example, Italians tend to produce a voiced *z* where a voiceless *s* is required, Francophones show a propensity to rely on their oxitonic accent, whereas the afore-mentioned Chinese learners divide words into syllables in accordance with their L1 tones, or form interrogatives placing question words at the end of utterances, it being a Chinese rule of question formation.

Not only do inaccurate language forms constitute frequent language problems, but also disfluencies occur in large numbers and are wide in scope. To this group belong:

- repetitions, e.g. *Idę do do do do.....*,
- grammatical questions, e.g. *Widzę kogo co?.....*,
- filled pauses, e.g. *Eeeee.....*, *Aaaaa.....*,
- unfilled pauses,
- incorrectly used fixed expressions, e.g. *dziękuję* instead of *dzień dobry*, and
- L1 use, e.g. **Bardzo sympatyczny animal*, **Ten Nachklub*.

These language behaviours seem to be equally L1-induced. It is strongly evident in, for example, filled pauses the learners of Polish use (*Eeee* typical of Chinese learners and users whereas *Aaaa* illustrative of English influences). In a similar vein, inclusion of English words is a tendency the English learners and users of Polish indicate, while German linguistic features constitute what Germans usually relate to.

The latter category, that is, the least frequently occurring fossilised language forms within the scope of accuracy, comprises:

- wrong quantifiers, e.g. **dużo ludzi*,
- problems with conditionals, e.g. **Gdybym miał czas, bym poszedł bym na spacer*,
- problems with passive, e.g. **Zamek został zbudowano*, **Książka została czytana*,

- overuse of sentence subjects, e.g. **Marek poszedł do biblioteki, żeby on oddał książkę*, and
- double verbs, e.g. **Lubię robić pływać*.

Again, all the regularities observed can be accounted for L1 transfer. The incorporation of sentence subjects considered irrelevant in Polish mirrors English and Chinese syntax rules. The same seems to be true of the so called “double verbs”, which, as in the example hinted at above, are a direct reflection of English-specific grammar wording.

In the case of the so called fluency-and text coherence-related “deviations”, the following sporadical language behaviours are observed:

- reformulations, e.g. *To jest to są...*
- correctly formed fixed expressions, e.g. *Według mnie...*
- reliance on English, e.g. *let's say..., I think..., right...,* and
- problems with style, e.g. **Czy Pani idziesz do sklepu?*

Judging by the very examples, they are common to all learners and users of Polish as a FL, irrespective of language background and source language they operate on. Paraphrasing, for instance, is made use of whenever the learners come across obstacles in expressing themselves. Such difficulties are also resolved by means of referring to English which, being a lingua franca, serves the role of a “walking stick”, regardless of other languages acquired and/or learned. Being not only the least L1-specific, but also the least frequently-used phenomena, they allow for making a statement that the more peculiarities a given language has, the greater the likelihood of L1 transferable behaviours, and the other way round.

3. Fossilization in SLA and SLL

Speaking of learner fossilization, a distinction between second language acquisition (SLA) and second language learning (SLL) has to be drawn. The division presented here rests on the accounts of the Maturation Hypothesis marking the age boundary between acquisition and learning. The former, often referred to as the child second language acquisition, ranges from Schwartz's (2003) age bracket between four and seven years to, among others, McLaughlin's (1978) criterion, i.e. lengthening the exposure to the second language from the age of three to the post-pubertal period. The latter, on the other hand, follows acquisition, beginning with its

cut-off point, and is restricted to the so called “late learners” and their conscious process of learning a language.

Different as the two processes are, both (child and late) second language grammars are potentially fossilizable in the contexts in which there is the absence of native speakers. Most frequently, it happens when the SL acquirers/learners have no access to and do not interact with the native speaking peers of the TL. Apart from interaction and every-day social encounters that determine the path of language development, its level of advancement is highly determined by the L1, influencing the initial L2 hypothesis in relation to a particular property P of the TL. To borrow from the Full Access Model Hypothesis quoted by Lakshmanan (2006:113), if the grammar generated by the learners’ initial L2 hypothesis does not match with the target grammar, the learners’ interlanguage grammar needs to be restructured. Restructuring, consequently, depending on the quality and form of the input available, can be furthered in two opposite directions. In the situations in which there is a positive evidence in the input, successful restructuring is expected, and language convergence. However, when the property P, previously “filtered” by the learners’ L2 hypothesis, is underdetermined by the L2 input and the learners’ L1 grammar, permanent divergence from the native speaker grammar is predicted, the condition of which is tantamount to fossilization.

L2 children are expected to be more successful than late L2 learners in their re-analysis of the TL input, and, in turn, more successful in combating fossilization. It can be accounted for the lack of UG constraints that, according to the Parameter Setting Hypothesis, block the second language learning, simply because the parameters that were available to the child are no longer accessible to the older second language learner. Secondly, returning momentarily to Selinker and Lakshmanan’s (1993: 198) Multiple Effects Principle, language transfer does not play the role of a co-factor in the child L2 acquisition. Given that, stabilization of interlanguage forms in children is more likely to lead to development rather than permanent stabilization, i.e. fossilization, attributed to post-pubertal L2 learners. These, in contrast, are highly disadvantaged because, as Schachter (1996) insinuates, their prior language either facilitates or inhibits their L2 attainment, depending on the underlying similarities and differences of the languages in contact. Inhibitions the prior knowledge brings to the learning process are reflected in the L2 learners’ production, including such properties as strong L1 accents or L1-specific

word order. Secondly, both their errors and non-errors persist in the same linguistic environments long after the cessation of change in the development of their TL grammar. And, finally, as a result of it, their language attainment appears to be nothing but a reflection of incompleteness with respect to the TL norms, the extent of which largely depends on the very similarities and differences of the languages in question

3.1. Fossilization and learning curve

Language incompleteness Schachter (1990) equates with fossilization, conceived of as the outcome of synchronic erroneous and non-erroneous forces, can be presented in relation to the learning curve. Here, the situation in which the number of errors and non-errors systematically increases with time seems to correspond to the learning decline, illustrated as follows:

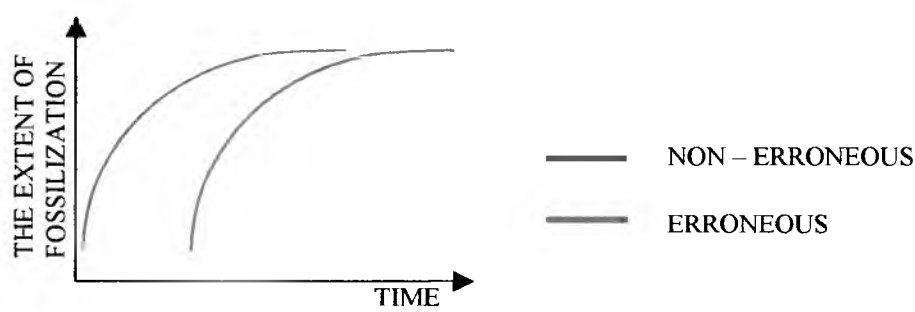


Fig. 2.1. Progressive fossilization vs regressive learning curve (after Włodarski 1998: 128)

By contrast, the proportions of erroneous and non-erroneous language features can take on the form of decreasing tendencies, correlated to the knowledge growth, represented by means of the improvement curve:

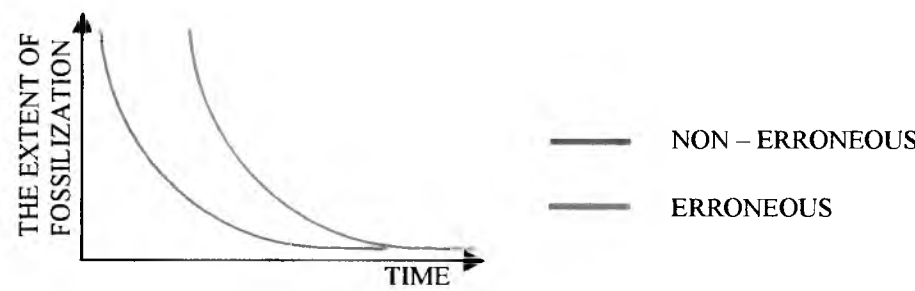


Fig.2.2. Regressive fossilization vs progressive learning curve (after Włodarski 1998: 128)

Apart from language regression and language progression the graphs stand for respectively, there might be the case of the so called mixed patterns, in which the

ratio of correct and incorrect language behaviours fluctuates, the example of which is the following pro(re)gressive tendency, depicting the very changing rates of learning:

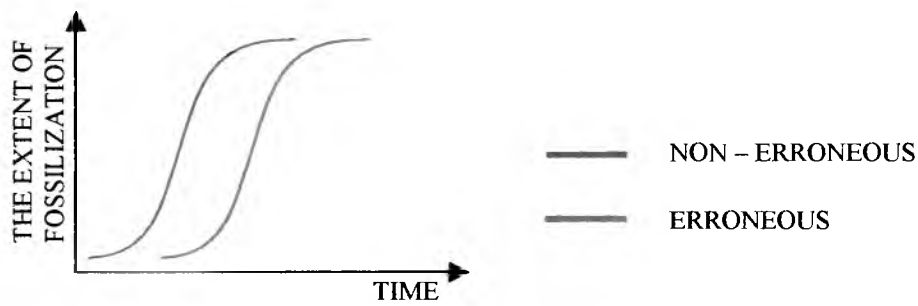


Fig. 2.3 Pro(re)gressive fossilization vs re(pro)gressive learning curve (after Włodarski 1998:128)

Gradual curves the above-mentioned circumstances were built of can be replaced by sharp learning curves when the extent of language (in)accuracy is irregular and fluctuates sharply against the time. If this is the case, the evidence of fossilization is resultative of sudden intensive bouts of learning, including a zig-zag language deterioration and improvement respectively.

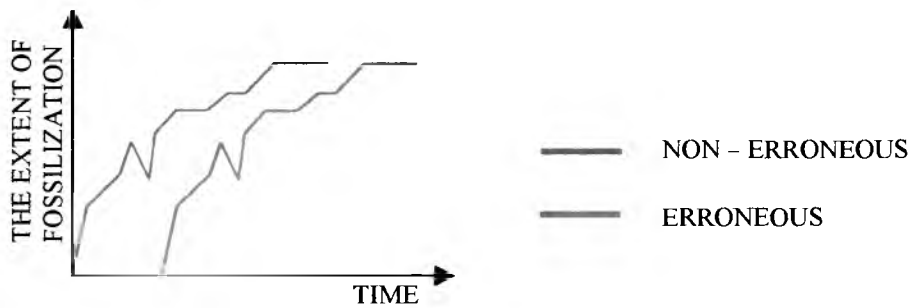


Fig.2.4. Irregular fossilization vs irregular learning curve (after Włodarski 1998: 129)

As the term erroneous and non-erroneous fossilization has been coined on the basis of a number of linguistic features common to the two varieties of the very phenomenon, the suggestion is that it can also be studied from the perspective of particular language areas giving rise to either of them. Under this view, the proportions of errors and non-errors hinted at above, are likely to be converted into specific language properties (e.g. phonology, grammar, lexis), reflecting their levels of fossilization, and consequently, the extent of specific fossilization symptoms.

4. Fossilization indicators

Symptoms of fossilization, consequently, are investigated and defined on the basis of fossilization indicators. These, however, are believed to differ in terms of the language targeted and language environment.

Building on the scope of fossilization (Chapter 1), the phenomenon in question affects both an oral and written mode of the language, and takes on the shape of correct and incorrect language properties. Taking into account the text type, the evidence of fossilization is likely to derive from a number of violations of rules and features constituting a given discourse.

Oral performance, generally speaking, relies on accuracy and fluency. Accuracy, being the ability to produce correct sentences in a given language, rests on grammar, lexis, morphology and phonology. The first of them controls the way in which linguistic units, such as words and phrases, are combined to form appropriate utterances. Lexis, accordingly, regulates relationships between sets of lexemes, words, compounds and idioms. Morphology imposes the structure and formation rules on words and phrases. Phonology, on the other hand, is responsible for speech production, transmission of speech sounds through the air, and sound perception by the listener(s). When it comes to fluency, it stands for the ability to produce language with ease, primacy being given to continuous speech. Its easiness of expression, accordingly, is determined by several factors, the use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, interjections and interruptions, to name a few.

Written language production, consequently, is governed by language accuracy and coherence. The former, on account of the written discourse specificity, consists in grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling and punctuation. The first three dimensions do not change their functions, in comparison to the spoken language variety. Spelling, however, adds to the scope of accuracy the rules of forming words with the letters in the correct order. Punctuation, accordingly, deals with the use of special marks serving the purpose of showing divisions between phrases and sentences, and making the meaning clearer. The clarity of meaning as such, though, is mostly determined by language coherence. This very text quality, corresponding to the oral fluency, is made up of discourse continuity, marked by inter-sentential and intra-sentential links.

Based on the very distinction, deviations from the above-mentioned rules constitute the so called oral and written fossilization indicators respectively.

ORAL INDICATORS OF FOSSILIZATION	WRITTEN INDICATORS OF FOSSILIZATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungrammatical units • Wrong words/phrases • Non-existent lexemes • Ill-formed words • Wrong pronunciation • Final and filled pauses • Fillers • Repetitions • False starts (reformulations) • Unfinished words/phrases • Overreliance on certain structures • Overuse of discourse markers • Redundant categories • Meaningless expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungrammatical units • Wrong words/phrases • Non-existent lexemes • Ill-formed words • Wrong spelling • Wrong punctuation • Fillers • Repetitions • False starts (reformulations) • Unfinished words/phrases • Overreliance on certain structures • Overuse of discourse markers • Redundant categories • Meaningless expressions

Table 2.1 Fossilization indicators

As can readily be seen, the list of fossilization indicators the author proposes proves an already-made assumption about an erroneous and non-erroneous nature of the phenomenon in question. Language incorrectness manifests itself in ungrammaticalities, wrong usage and form of words, as well as instances of mispronunciation and mispunctuation. Language appropriacy, accordingly, covers the use of grammatically-correct yet disconnected language forms. Such production discontinuity, among other things, results from the overuse of fillers, repetitions, reformulations and unfinished language strings.

Fixed as the inventory of fossilization indicators may seem, the occurrence of the very configurations is subject to change, both with respect to the language and language learner(s). Judging by the scope of difficulties the Polish language, i.e. the native language in the case of the subjects used in the present study, creates for its learners, the list of language behaviours indicative of fossilization is to comprise:

- ungrammatical units,
- wrong words/phrases,
- non-existent lexemes,
- ill-formed words,
- wrong pronunciation,
- wrong intonation,

- wrong spelling,
- repetitions,
- filled pauses,
- unfilled pauses,
- grammatical questions, and
- L1.

As seen from the above, the range of inaccurate language forms outnumbers the accurate language means generating fossilization. Similar discrepancies are likely to be observed when examining SLA and SLL, i.e. child and late second language learners. According to Foster-Cohen (2001: 341 ff.), differences in the range of fossilization indicators between the two have their roots in the level of metalinguistic, mental, reasoning, lexical and linguistic structural development characterising children and older learners. The former, being cognitively immature and at the outset of language development, perform at the lower proficiency level than the latter. This implies lower-level ungrammaticalities and a poorer range of vocabulary when it comes to child-specific fossilization indicators. Also, bearing in mind capacity and skill development, L2 child learners are supposed to fossilise when speaking rather than writing, and operate more on disfluencies, such as the overuse of fixed expressions or fillers, than inaccuracies per se. And although there is a substantial body of evidence suggesting that both child and older learners suffer from asymmetry in the development of finiteness inflectional morphemes, and encounter difficulties with overt suppliance of suffixal verb inflections, the very problems, as Lakshmanan (2006: 108) pointedly remarks, persist in the long-term in L2 adult learners, and indicate fossilization of second language learners exclusively. This group, which, owing to developed cognitive abilities and metalinguistic skills, performs at all levels of language systems and subsystems, is expected to develop symptoms of fossilization in relation to any property of the interlanguage in the course of its development.

5. Fossilization and language development

The role and the place of fossilization in the language learning process are touched upon below in this section, which starts with the characteristics and nature of language(s) as such, and proceeds with a description of the interlanguage, prominence being given to the stages of interlanguage development.

To quote evidence from various studies on language, it can be firmly stated that languages are *dynamic* in nature. Following Hyltenstam & Viberg's (1993: 3) metaphor, languages are portrayed as living organisms. They are born, they grow, develop, and die. Being, in one way or another, related to each other, they have parents and sisters, and they share no genetics with unrelated languages.

To see it from a natural sciences' perspective, every single language can be compared to air or water, and described as 'inherently dynamic, something that exhibits change and flux (...)', and is characterised by motion resulting from what Hyltenstam & Viberg (1993: 3) call "natural" forces. The changes under discussion are determined by social contexts in which languages are used, language contact and individual circumstances. These, in turn, have a bearing on the language development, which is conceived of as a continuum from the earliest period of development, known as progression, to the time-period when a language successively regresses, subject to abuse and misuse of linguistic forms, and, finally, dies due to e.g. non-use or underuse of a given language. The very progression-regression continuum is, by no means, unique to L1 acquisition. It applies to, and is widely observed in the process of the second or foreign language acquisition, notably the learner interlanguage development.

The learner language has received a plethora of terms and designations. One of the most widely known and used in the literature of the subject is the concept of *interlanguage*, proposed by Selinker (1974: 35), which relates to 'a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a TL norm'. This attempted production of TL norms is far from being normative, which readily explains the notion itself, pointing to the "in-between quality" of the language being mastered, i.e. a combination of both L1 and TL elements. To describe the very interim grammar the learner builds on his/her way to TL competence, James (1971; after Norrish 1994: 11) used the term *interlingua*, where he underlined temporariness and dualism of a linguistic system. Nemser (1974), referring to the phenomenon in question, emphasised the very fact of approximation to the TL form, and created an *approximative system*, characterised as a 'deviant linguistic system actually employed by the learner attempting to utilize the target language' (Nemser *ibid.*: 55). In his definition of a learner language, Corder (1974: 25), stressed the developmental character of language acquisition, and proposed to name it a *transitional competence*. What is more, in his attempts to

accentuate the uniqueness of a linguistic system, Corder (ibid.: 25) classifies the language of a learner as an *idiosyncratic dialect*, that is a self-contained language variety. In so doing, he points to individuality and peculiarity the learner language should be associated with.

Drawing together all the characteristics presented so far, it can be admitted with no reservations that the interlanguage (learner language) displays a set of distinguishing features. Following Ellis (1994: 50 ff.):

- 1) Language-learner language is *permeable*.

It means that the language is transient and unstable, namely the rules that constitute the learner’s knowledge of the language are neither fixed nor definite.

- 2) Language-learner language is *dynamic*.

This entails that the language fluctuates and is subject to change. It changes successively as the learner makes progress, that is goes along the continuum.

- 3) Language-learner language is *variable*.

It implies that the language varies. Language variability, which concerns variation in the choice of linguistic forms employed by the learner, can be studied from two different perspectives (Figure 2.5). However both pertain to and trace the development of linguistic items, it is *horizontal variation* that covers the variation observable in the learner language at any single time, and *vertical variation* which is related to the language variation evident over a given time-period.

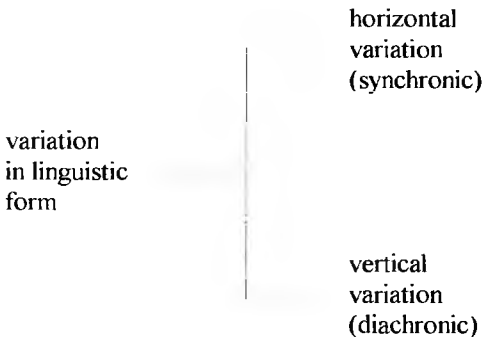


Fig. 2.5. Variability in interlanguage (Ellis 1995:134)

As illustrated below, interlanguage variability comes in all shapes and sizes, each carrying a varying amount of weight in the language development process. What seems to be of utmost importance is *systematic* and *non-systematic variability* (Figure 2.6), the former manifesting itself when the learner progresses and extends the contextual range of the forms acquired by mastering their use in additional

stylistic and linguistic contexts, the latter being realised as the learner slowly resolves the free variability by developing clear form-function relationships in his/her performance.

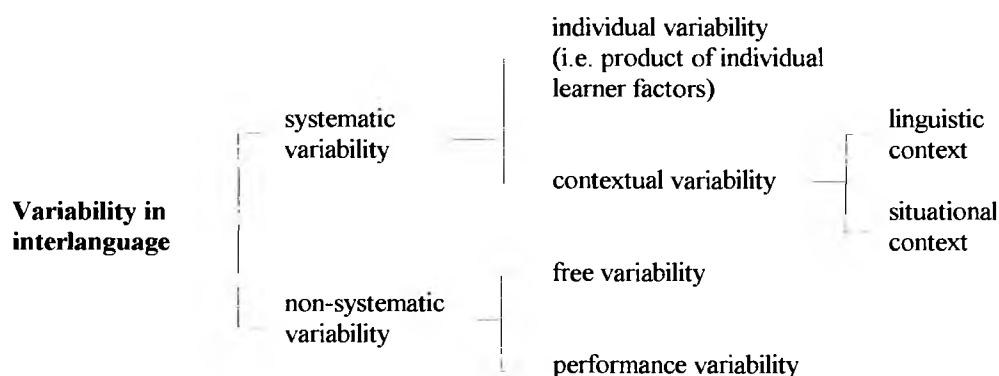


Fig 2.6. Language variability (after Ellis 1994: 76)

A degree of the (non)-systematicity of the interlanguage variability can be easily measured. As Zabor (1996: 61 ff.) claims, the procedures are three-fold and involve:

- Proportions of TL variants (used to measure individual subjects' scores in terms of percentage of correct forms produced on each task, or in each linguistic context). These are expected to measure the proportion and/or preponderance of the systematic variation in the language over the non-systematic one.
- Implicational analysis (i.e. the attempt to show certain properties of the speech of individuals or groups of speakers in such a way that the presence of a given property implies the occurrence of certain other properties). This, once applied, is likely to show regularities in the occurrence of linguistic forms.
- Variable rule analysis (a way of describing the variation occurring in the spoken version of a specific linguistic form which aims at discovering the relative influence of a number of hypothesised factors on the operation of a given rule). This type of analysis is supposed to indicate how systematic the language variability is, as well as its resistance to other uninternalised rules in the interlanguage system.

4) Language learner language is systematic.

As hinted at above, the learner language is progressive. Free variability, which is predominant at the outset of the language learning, starts to disappear and is overtaken by systematicity. It denotes that the language is regular in the sense that it is possible to detect a rule-based nature of the learner's use of the target language

which takes place in a very predictable way, and patterns in a uniform way known as the *order or sequence of development*.

Diversified and different as the qualities of the learner language are, they are lumped together and make the path of the language development which constitutes an earlier-stated continuum or, as the Universal Theory of Language Acquisition, cited by Hyltenstam & Viberg (1993: 24), puts it, 'a uniform natural route along which variational patterns change gradually over time, restricted by inherent linguistic constraints'. The changes in question are reflected in the *stages of interlanguage development*.

5.1. Fossilization and stages of IL development

Following Lengo's (1995: 20) remark on errors being 'an indicator of the learners' stages in their target language development', Brown (1987: 175 ff.) presents four stages to describe the learners' efforts in their approximation to the target language system:

1. Random errors or pre-systematic stage

At this particular stage, the learner is barely aware of the systematicity and regularity ascribed to the language system. Thus, the learner, more often than not, experiments with the language, and, as a result, produces errors at random.

2. Emergent stage

This time, the learner's knowledge about the language is increased. It involves being aware of the rules that create the whole system, and applying them in a more or less successful manner. Still, the errors are committed and cannot be corrected by the learner him/herself. Typically, the avoidance of certain structures and/or topics is noticed, and the phenomenon of backsliding is likely to occur.

3. Systematic stage

Here the learner shows more consistency in producing the language. The rules are not all well-formed, yet the output approximates the TL standards. Moreover, the learner is capable of correcting the errors when they are signalled or pointed out to him/her.

4. Stabilization or post-systematic stage

At this final stage of interlanguage development, the interlanguage form gets stabilised. The learner produces relatively few instances of incorrect language, and is able to self-correct. As a result, the learner feels at ease with using the language. He/she is able to successfully begin, join in and finish a conversation, getting the

meaning across and understanding his/her interlocutor(s). Complete enough as the linguistic system may seem to the learner to effectively convey meanings, it is far from the native speaker's competence, and does not represent the learner's total second or foreign language system. Although this stage is very often accompanied by the learner's sense of fulfillment, deriving from good communication, satisfaction of communicative needs and achievement of communicative goals, the language system created does reflect a varying degree of interlanguage development and language advancement within a particular discourse domain, linguistic skill and/or language subsystem. For reasons such as above, it is an obvious statement to make that the stabilised language is more likely to "get stuck" rather than develop. The more likely scenario is the former one, that is stabilization being tantamount to "language vegetation".

In this view, Han's (2004: 102) perspective on and perception of stabilization comes in handy. She claims that it can take on at least three different forms:

1. A temporary stage of "getting stuck"
2. Interlanguage restructuring
3. Long-term cessation of interlanguage development.

The first one reflects a situation or a phase typical of all learning. It is believed to be natural for the learner to get stuck as it is natural for the process of learning to exhibit a plateau, especially as a result of a temporary non-exposure to input, break from the school-learning, etc. The second case is superficial in nature. It is so because restructuring of interlanguage knowledge produces merely a surface appearance of stabilization of a certain interlanguage form, which with no further study of related cognitive processes, resembles and can as well be interpreted as a consequence of a learning plateau, i. e. a temporary stage of learning cessation. The third example of stabilization, however, is a completely different story. Long-term cessation of interlanguage development is, by definition, marked by permanence, persistence and resistance in relation to the quality of interlanguage forms. As these qualities are at the same time well-known indicators of *frozen competence*, it is legitimate to say that the third case of stabilization might lead to yet another stage of interlanguage development, that is fossilization, defined by Han (2004: 23) as '(...) an observable process whereby learning manifests a strong tendency toward cessation in spite of repeated practice and exposure to the TL'.

The discussion on the relationship between stabilization and fossilization in the SLA is very inconclusive in nature. Close as the connection between them may seem, one cannot be coterminous with the other. The relationship stabilization and fossilization form is, according to Selinker & Han (1996), that of a continuum or a cline progression where the former one constitutes the “harbinger” of the latter. In a similar vein, Brown (1987: 176) treats stabilization as a phenomenon preceeding fossilization. Last but not least, Han (2004), in her body of research, labels stabilization a prelude to fossilization.

To support the view, Han (ibid.:102) introduces four pieces of evidence demonstrating that stabilization is the first sign of fossilization. Each of the following constitutes, at the same time, a defining characteristic of stabilization alone. They go as follows:

- 1) Non-variant appearance over time of interlanguage forms,
- 2) Variational reappearance over time of interlanguage features that appear to have been eradicated (backsliding),
- 3) Context-based variational appearance over time of interlanguage target-like and non-target-like forms (stabilized inter-contextual variation),
- 4) Variational appearance over time of interlanguage target-like and non-target like features in the same context (stabilized intra-contextual variation).

Although each of the characteristics presented adds a varying degree of weight to the fossilization process, it is sufficient to observe the occurrence of any of the above-mentioned to speak of stabilization as a preliminary stage to fossilization.

6. Fossilization as the feature of interlanguage

In the light of the arguments presenting a close relationship between stabilization and fossilization, the latter can be given its own place alongside the continuum characterising the process of interlanguage development. Since interlanguage learning, to quote Selinker (1992: 258) is viewed as a “ ‘cline’ progression from stable plateau to stable plateau”, fossilization is thought to resemble a “cline” regression, moving from stable plateau to the minimum of language development. It refers to the situation(s) in which the learner operates with an interlanguage system, the quality of which changes with time. The route from one point to another is marked by contemporary-stable configurations which culminate in what is referred to as permanent non-learning resulting from *ultimate language achievement*.

6.1. Fossilization and ultimate attainment

Being defined by Birdsong (1999: 10) as an ‘end state or asymptote of SLA’, ultimate attainment has legitimate grounds to be synonymous with fossilization. Both readily imply lack of success among the second and/or foreign language learners. This lack of success has been, in other terms, rendered as *general failure* and *differential success* in the mastery of a second language.

General failure traces back to Selinker’s 5% rate of success attributed to SLA, and opinions shared by Gregg (1999) and Long (1990) voicing that complete native-like competence is never achieved. Their views seem to support Schachter’s (1988; after Nakuma 2006: 22) Incompleteness Hypothesis, holding that ‘efforts by adult L2 learners to acquire native competency in L2 are doomed to result in incomplete success’, and Bley-Vroman’s (1989; after Nakuma *ibid.*:22) Fundamental Differences Hypothesis, emphasising the existence of language deficits which differentiate non-native from native speakers. From this angle, fossilization, whether it be language incompleteness or permanent failure previously remarked on, has every right to instill, and has already caused growing fears among second language learners. Taking into account the fact that, as Ellis (1994: 48) has it, fossilization ‘occurs in most learners and cannot be remedied by further instruction’, or, to quote Selinker (1992: 252), ‘(...) people are pre-programmed to fossilize (...)’, it is clear that some of the fears voiced by the learners have reason to exist. The extent of fears has inclined M. S. Wysocka (2005) to compare the phenomenon of fossilization to an incurable illness. Both are said to bring about real fear. The fear in relation to fossilization has been called *fossilophobia* by VanPatten (1998: 251) who conceives of it as ‘a rather widespread fear of fossilization’. The level of fear, and source of worries have been examined by M. S. Wysocka (2007). Apparently, about 40% of the questioned subjects declared being terrified at the thought of their language competence getting fossilized, salience being given to environmental and individual factors “fuelling” their fear.

Differential success, on the other hand, mirrors numerous counterarguments in favour of a considerable extent to which the command of language has proved to be developed. Fossilization selectivity can be confirmed by the Selective Processing Effects Hypothesis, according to which, to quote Birdsong (2006:184), ‘not all on-line language processing tasks can be performed to native-like levels’. This entails, as has been emphasised before, that some part of the interlanguage system is difficult

to deal with, and fossilises, whereas some language subsystems are mastered easily and, hence, facilitate the language mastery. Hypothetically, this might serve as an explanation for those who, in M. S. Wysocka's (2007) mini-scale project, against all expectations, exhibit no fear of fossilization, and are positive as well as self-confident about their command of language.

6.2. Fossilization and language habit development

The effects of fossilization the language learners/users are afraid of in relation to their future performance, as well as those they already suffer from, might as well be related to language habits. Although deprived of an exact position in the course of the IL development, language habit formation has its own place in the very developmental process. First, language habits lead to fossilization, and, second, they typify it.

To account for the contribution language habits make to fossilization, it is necessary to return momentarily to behaviourism, and its explanation of habit formation. Strictly speaking, it develops in a stimulus – response – reinforcement chain of events. Following Skinner (1953: 183), it is the reinforcers that 'follow a response and tend to strengthen behaviour or increase the probability of a recurrence of that response', leading to habitual actions. In practical terms, the role ascribed to reinforcement in behaviour development is taken over and performed by feedback in the context of language learning. Thus, it is the teacher feedback that is assumed to evoke language habits. In trying to illustrate the linkage between the former and the latter, Brown (1987: 187) clarifies the functions and consequences of positive feedback. In the light of Vigil and Oller's (1976: 286) observations, it follows that positive feedback, in its cognitive dimension, results in the 'reinforcement of the forms used, and a conclusion on the part of learners that their speech is well formed'. In the situation in which these allegedly correct language forms are, in fact, incorrect, the resultant routinised language expressions are subject to fossilization. Consequently, a learner who is given first positive affective feedback, i.e. the teacher saying "I like your response" (despite the fact that it is far from being perfect), and then positive cognitive feedback, such as "I understand" (because the meaning is clear although the form is not), each reinforcing an incorrect language item, is likely to become a fossilised language learner/user.

Viewed from this perspective, fossilization is restricted to the so called incorrect language habits, composed of ungrammatical and/or erroneous language

items exclusively. As there is another side of the coin, it being grammatically correct language habits, the scope of fossilization broadens immediately to cover grammatically acceptable and non-erroneous language forms. These, to list a few examples, are supposed to be manifested in, among other things, the overuse of pre-fabricated patterns, routine formulas and fixed expressions in general.

7. Fossilization and language attrition

The afore-mentioned persistent and habitual language reactions can be treated a “prelude” to language attrition. What links fossilization and L2 attrition, as Nakuma (2006: 21) claims, constitutes ‘within-learner outcomes manifested as failure in reaching native-like L2 competence’. More precisely, the relationship between the two phenomena has been strengthened due to the concept of permanence designating either of them. Under this view, to build on Nakuma (ibid.: 21), fossilization is construed of as ‘a permanent state of not attaining a desired L2 native state’ whereas L2 attrition results from ‘the permanent loss of some level of L2 competence that the L2 user reportedly had acquired at an earlier stage’. This places fossilization and L2 attrition along the language continuum. If, as Nakuma (2006: 23) suggests, it ‘begins at point L1/zero L2 and continues through varying degrees of IL development up to a potential maximum point of L1/near-native L2’, fossilization is likely to be at its front end, during the stage of active interlanguage development and use. L2 attrition, accordingly, is expected to stand at the back end of the continuum, during the post-active interlanguage development and use stage, succeeding the long-term cessation of interlanguage development and use, i.e. fossilization. As the two go in tandem and complete the IL development, it is crucial to be able to discriminate one from another. In his attempts to do so, Nakuma (2006: 29) arrives at a workable solution to the problem, arguing that:

One concludes that fossilization has happened after observing a second language learner manifest repeatedly and for a prolonged period of time an inability to produce a native-like L2 target, despite the fact that the learner makes an effort and has a good opportunity not to fail. Similarly, one concludes that L2 attrition has occurred when a second language learner reports the permanent loss of some L2 competency level claimed to have been acquired at an earlier point in life.

Following from the above, it seems to be legitimate to say that the difference between fossilization and attrition lies in the very nature of the two processes. The former, being beyond the learner’s awareness, needs to be confirmed, verified or disproved by observations conducted on the part of the researcher, whereas the

latter, appearing to be conscious for the learner, can be studied on the basis of his/her reports of the case in point.

8. Fossilization and language competence

Borrowing from Brown (1987), fossilization touches upon the foundations and rules of the language internalized by the language learner/user, notably language competence or, in other terms, declarative knowledge. Although purely theoretical in nature, it cannot be left untouched in the face of fossilization. Deprived of the knowledge about the language, the language learners/users are very likely to represent gaps in their linguistic repertoire, manifested in syntactic, semantic, morphological and phonological language deficits. To name a few examples, structural deviations are presumed to oscillate around sentence construction, and, include the instances of wrong word order or miscellaneous language forms. Semantic problems might be grounded in learners' lack of knowledge on word meaning, word use, and word combinability, bringing about, for example, the creation of non-existent lexemes or miscollocated entities. Morphological difficulties are likely to arise from the learners' inability to form words in an appropriate way, thus, giving rise to, for instance, wrong suffixal or prefixal inflections. Last but not least, phonological deformations are claimed to result from the absence of the learners' fundamental knowledge of how to realize and produce certain speech sounds, it being responsible for, among other things, misarticulations of individual phonemes as well as whole clusters. At the same time, they may have problems with free access to the interlanguage system, or, even worse, the language-governed rules may fluctuate. These can be either tightened up or too relaxed, misinterpreted or mistaken, and, in many a case, overused or totally forgotten. Such knowledge-based limitations are believed to lead to distractions, shifts of attention and interest which, in turn, bring about a low level of comprehension competence. Irrespective of the rule violation, the result of the learners' inability to understand spoken and/or written discourse properly is one and the same, namely performance errors, poor production competence or even lack of it. These, under even worse scenarios, are claimed to lead to a language blockade as such or blockages in learner performance, the former being reflected in the cessation of learning and refusal to re-learn it, the latter being manifested in communication avoidance, topic avoidance or message abandonment at the least.

8.1. Fossilization and frozen competence

Taking into account the above-discussed erroneous and non-erroneous knowledge-based competences, two different varieties of “freezing” can be distinguished. The first type covers those language features which are incorrect, and, being resistant to any corrections, remain frozen. The second variety, on the other hand, consists of mechanical and automatic language forms which, being difficult to “reactivate”, freeze at the level of creative skill construction. Whether it be the former or the latter, the amount of freezing the two types are marked by is determined by the number and frequency of their occurrence, and learners’ proficiency level. The regularities in question seem to support the statement that the more frequent the use of frozen language properties, the more frosted their “consistency”. The relationship between frozen competence and language advancement, as suggested by Klein (1997), seems to be regulated by means of two opposing forces, the first one relying on the assumption that the earlier the freezing the worse, the other supporting a counterargument saying that the later the language freezes, the better. To account for the former, simple language forms offer very little to operate on. Being frozen, they leave nothing to choose from and base on to produce the language. The latter case should not be treated as resistant to fossilization, yet, the language competence the advanced language learners/users possess enables them to function in the TL to some extent. However, from a different perspective, propagated, among others, by Selinker (1974), it is at the level satisfying one’s communicative and language functioning needs that the language begins to freeze. The link between frozen competence and communicative needs, accordingly, can take on the form of the situation in which some L2 learners and users might be acutely aware of their fossilised language deviances, however, they would not make any attempt to eliminate them on account of their fossilised variety being easy to handle. The other reason for the status quo might be the absence of stimuli from the outside to develop the language, and/or, instead, obtaining common consent for such an incomplete language competence, the learners/users get used to and operate on their frozen competence, the result of which being fossilization, compared by Brown (1987:186) to “cryogenation”, i.e. the process of freezing matter at very low temperatures.

8.2. Fossilization and communicative competence

The influence of fossilization, however, is much more profound than the afore-mentioned, and extends over all constituent parts of communicative competence. To begin with, a low level of grammatical competence results in lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonological errors. Additionally, semantic problems are believed to appear repeatedly, bringing about grammatically unacceptable and ambiguous utterances.

Similar problems and difficulties are likely to arise in the case of discourse competence. Being a complement of grammatical competence, it is most often affected by fossilization in the area of syntax and sentence-grammar semantics. Practically speaking, the learners are unable to connect sentences in stretches of discourse, and are not capable of building a meaningful whole out of a sequence of utterances. What comes to light, instead, is fragmented and disconnected speech, making the output ambiguous and incomprehensible.

When sociolinguistic competence is influenced by fossilization, the language learners/users are expected to commit a “linguistic faux pas”. Its source ranges from the lack of adaptation of the surroundings to language incompatibility with the context of situation and circumstances. Its manifestation covers verbal and non-verbal patterns of behaviour hardly ever accepted by the TLC. Most likely, the learners would use inappropriate style, register and gesticulation, or speak outdated language.

In the case of strategic competence, on the other hand, fossilization impairs communication. The learners are supposed to perform at a slow pace and chaotically, with the use of artificially long pauses and countless repetitions. Besides, they tend to rely on their language habits and, more often than not, resort to their L1. At worst, to build on Bachman (1990), deprived of the knowledge and ability to determine communicative goals, assess communicative resources, plan communication and execute this communication, they refuse to communicate at all.

Whether it be lack of communication, poor performance or a low level of competence displayed by the language learner/user, it is fossilization to be blame. Its adverse effects are far-reaching and permanent in nature, causing the above-mentioned to suffer a lot from frozen competence.

The scope of fossilization at this “communicative competence level” seems to be largely influenced, and, to some extent, instigated by the Communicative

Approach and its methodological implications. These, among other things, advocate focus on meaning rather than form, and, leniency or, in other words, tolerance towards mistakes in general, leading to fossilised language forms. Unnoticed and/or unattended by the teacher, the erroneous language features will never be spotted by the learners/users themselves. As a result, both the former and the latter are pre-conditioned to be communicatively fossilised. So are their fellow teachers and classmates accordingly.

9. Fossilization and language performance

Besides competence, fossilization affects performance, the immediate outcome of which can be discourse avoidance. However, when equating language performance with procedural knowledge, the effects of fossilization spread, reaching a malfunction of learner management devices or a complete lack of them. The former case can be illustrated by means of a misuse or overuse of achievement strategies whereas the latter pertains to the exploitation of avoidance strategies. Strategy misuse is presented on the basis of Faerch and Kasper's (1983) classification of compensatory strategies. These, most frequently, include borrowing, anglicising, and literal translation. Each of them is an example of L1-based strategising, employed when the learner has no temporal (at the time of performance) access to L2 resources. These, being fossilised, trigger L1-specific equivalents, which, in turn, generate the production of misused language forms and responses. On the other hand, fossilization of L2 devices can cause the learner to overuse certain communication strategies to finally achieve his/her aim. To this group belong paraphrasing, word coinage, restructuring, appeals and gestures. Here, the boundary between the regular use and the overuse of the above-mentioned has been explicitated by Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983:125), the criterion being the stage of learner development at which he/she resorts to any of them. What is acceptable, then, is the situation in which the learner chooses a given strategy because, taking into account his/her developmental stage, a given linguistic property is not at his/her disposal. If, by any chance, the learner relies on any of the devices in question at a later stage, when he/she knows the language form, it is classified as the strategy overuse, and, at the same time, indicates that the process of fossilization has already taken place.

As far as the so called avoidance strategies are concerned, except for topic and message abandonment, the learners, being linguistically fossilised yet

determined to perform, make choices of what to avoid in their expression of thoughts. In the case of phonology, they are expected to select the words that are easier for them to pronounce. Graphological avoidance, as Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983: 123) have it, is likely to be reflected in learners' choice of words which are easier to spell. Morphological avoidance, accordingly, is believed to be exemplified in learners' preferences for regular over irregular language features. Similar learner choices are to be made as regards syntax and lexis, i.e. those excluding irregular syntactic structures, and words which have no precise L1 equivalents respectively. In so doing, the L2 learners/users manage to finalise their language performance, despite its language deficits and disfluencies.

9.1. Fossilization and fluency

To account for the relationship between fossilization and fluency, it must be born in mind that fluency is very often associated with the appropriate use of routines which, as Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998) underlines, enhance longer production and easier expression of speakers' thoughts. In this view, it can be rightly claimed that the better use of routines the speaker represents, the greater measure of fluency he/she scores. Beneficial as all formulaic speech seems for the language learning process, it may be equally disastrous when overrelied on and overused. If this is the case, its role, defined by Lesser and Erman (1977: 794) as that of "islands of reliability" allowing the speaker to actually plan the content of communication, and carry on speaking in extremely difficult language situations, loses significance. Instead, the language produced is simplified, repetitive and indicative of the incorrect usage of formulas. What it relies on covers paraphrased and rephrased language sequences, omissions and/or additions, as well as misordered and misarranged sentence components which are no longer representative of fluency. The list of "fluency disqualities" proposed by Nowak-Mazurkiewicz (2003: 126) goes as follows:

- vague language,
- expressions of frustration,
- expressions that "do not work",
- ungrammaticalities,
- incohesion,
- incoherence,

- repetitions,
- hedges,
- unfinished words,
- inability to develop the topic,
- inability to express complex ideas, and
- inability to pack in a lot of information into a passage.

It is without a doubt that all of them exert a negative influence on language production. However, the most devastating seem repetitions, hedges, incoherent and incohesive devices because they disconnect and discontinue discourses. Slightly less disadvantageous appear unfinished words which, most of all, make the message firmly uninformative. Finally, to the least harmful seem to belong ungrammatical structures which, being formally unacceptable, allow the speaker to get the meaning across. Whether it be low or high disfluency markers the speech consists of, it is likely to be fragmented and mechanical, and, to a large extent, indicative of fossilization.

9.2. Fossilization and hesitation sounds

Non-fluent language is also resultative of hesitation phenomena, such as unfilled and filled pauses, false starts and non-phonemic lengthenings of speech sounds, or a combination of all these features. Fossilised language, however, seems to be characterised by a random distribution of hesitation features, and their “cluster occurrence”. These do not only affect the way someone speaks, but also the way the listener perceives the language produced, and, when clustered, contribute enormously to the negative effects of language expression. As hesitancy phenomena, in general, are strictly connected to planning and searching phenomena in speech, it seems to be legitimate to say that those learners who overuse them experience problems with organization and realization of their performance. Difficulties with planning can be rooted in either the lack of global or factual knowledge, depriving the learner of ideas of what to say next, or they can be attributed to an already-fossilised strategic competence, responsible for planning, organising and executing communicative goals. Problems with the very production of speech, on the other hand, can be traced back to fossilised L2 resources. These might cover a structural item, lexical entity, structure of a word, or, simply, word pronunciation, blocking the appropriate word/sound articulation.

The length and frequency of hesitation features increases as the general language competence decreases, more often than not, resulting in unfinished words and/or excessive sound prolongation. Out of the three categories of fillers distinguished by Riggenbach (1991), fossilised learners are claimed to resort to unfilled pauses (between 3 to 5 seconds, or even more) and hesitations (of 3 to 4 seconds) rather than the so called “micropauses” lasting 2 seconds or even less. If this is the case, the language output can be compared to nothing but a continuous and progressive “hiatus” the learners/users experience in their IL repertoire, being, at the same time the immediate cause and result of fossilization.

9.3. Fossilization and accuracy

Not only is lack of fluency conducive to fossilization, but also lack of accuracy gives rise to the phenomenon in question. Language inaccuracy, coterminous with lack of grammatical correctness and exactness, is manifested via any type of language production deviating from the accepted TL norm. The extent of language deficiency depends a great deal on the amount of “freezing” it has already been affected by, and, consequently, is differently realized in particular language dimensions. The “culmination point”, that is, frozen competence encapsulates different kinds of language errors, from systematic to persistent language inaccuracies. These occur at the grammatical, lexical, morphological, phonological, as well as spelling and punctuation level. The examples of inaccurate grammar, to start with, are expected to fall into several categories, the most significant of which being language misuse, omission, addition, non-correspondence, as well as problematic issues. Likewise, the field of lexis is presumed to be multi-dimensional in range, and comprise, among other things, the instances of language misuse, wrong language forms, and non-existent linguistic entries. Morphological inaccuracies, accordingly, are likely to be subsumed under the label of language deformation and “misbuilt”. Also, phonological language deficits seem to be two-fold. More precisely, these are reported to be composed of wrong language features, and problematic cases as such. This is no longer true of spelling and punctuation which should rather be treated as single-type categories, composed of the examples of wrong language features, or the total lack of special punctuation marks respectively. Regardless of the type, however, incorrect and/or careless language production, which is not being either worked on by the language learner/user, or corrected by the teacher, deprives both of them of the so called sense of language exactness and

correctness. Such inappropriate language forms become deeply ingrained in the interlanguage system in the shape of permanent errors. The attempts to eliminate them are vain, no matter if the speaker wants it or not. In both cases, the errors are already fossilized or on their route to fossilization, and, thus, resistant to change.

10. Dynamic character of fossilization

Apparently, the route to fossilization insightedly determines its character. As outlined earlier in this chapter, fossilization develops alongside the IL continuum, and, thence, reaches its own position in the process of language advancement. The course of fossilization development, to quote Tarone (2006: 157 ff.), takes place ‘at a steady rate over time, or in fits and starts’. What is more, as Larsen-Freeman (2006:190) indicates, it is characterised by ‘a continual growth in some areas and relative stability in others’. Being portrayed as a miscellany of stable and unstable forces, the path of fossilization development is dynamic in nature, and this is an inescapable fact.

The evidence of fossilization “nomadism” also derives from an interplay the phenomenon in focus comes into with other processes. Apart from connections with language transfer inscribed into fossilization by means of the Multiple Effects Principle, the construct itself stands in a relationship to a number of factors. These range from cognitive, neuro-biological, psychological and socio-affective to environmental ones. Each of them affects fossilization to a varying degree, and conditions it in a different way. The most dynamic contact fossilization gets in, however, can be noticed in the case of neuro-biological and environmental issues. Under these circumstances, represented by, for instance, age, TL proficiency level or the quality of input, it proves to change most abruptly and rapidly. Potential changes fossilization undergoes concern its scope and frequency of occurrence.

The scope of fossilization differs and fluctuates. Its volatility is visible in the type and nature of fossilised language forms. According to Han (2003), they can take on the shape of invariant and/or variable non-native forms. Or, following from Birdsong (2006), they can envisage the features of non-nativelikes as well as nativelikeness, thereby being on the boundary of divergence and convergence. Language deviances, accordingly, are exemplified in erroneous language forms, whereas the instances of correct yet fossilised language strings are explicated in TL normative responses. Be it the former or the latter, it is syntax, semantics, morphology, phonology, spelling, and punctuation that are affected. In this respect,

fossilization dynamism is translated into the degree of (in)stability a given item is characterised by. Building on selective locality, fossilization strikes unexpectedly and unequally, namely, some parts of the interlanguage system, and its subsystems, can exhibit some fossilization, the case of which Han (2006: 77) regards “incomplete acquisition”, while others can be totally fossilization-free, reflecting the so called “complete acquisition”.

Equally differential is the influence fossilization has on language use as such. It is most readily manifested in a varying extent to which the learner’s language competence has been fossilised, and his/her language performance impeded. As for the former, it can lack in formal resources prerequisite for the latter. As a result of it, the productive performance of an IL is likely to be marked by a broad spectrum of disfluencies and inaccuracies, to name a few.

The re-emergence of fluency and accuracy deficits, as well as the proportions they reach at different points in time, can be illustrated in relation to the learning curve. Here, progressive and regressive tendencies are believed to stand for an increasing and decreasing amount of fossilization gradually settling in, while an irregular shape of the learning curve seems to correspond to sudden and asymmetric changes in the fossilised language competence the L2 learner/user experiences.

To conclude, fossilization, as Selinker and Han (2001) concur, should be considered modular and volatile since it, first, covers IL features constantly deviating from TL norms. Second, it entails transitions from one linguistic domain to another. Third, it exhibits persistence and resistance. And, lastly, it appears in the form of backsliding, i.e. operating on seemingly eradicated IL fossilisable structures.

11. Recapitulation

The discussion on the facets of fossilization pointed to the fact that the phenomenon under examination co-exists with the native language. It has been shown both in the context of English and Polish, the former including fossilised language responses produced by the English native speakers, the latter representative of fossilization-prone behaviours generated by two different types of the native language users of Polish, which is the language used by the native participants of the current study, and the FL learners/users of Polish.

It has also been emphasised that fossilization is characteristic of SLA and SLL, namely child and older L2 learners. The differences that emerge between the

two are mainly neuro-biological and cognitive in nature, thereby pre-conditioning the latter group to fossilize more likely than the former one, and to a larger extent.

The indicators of fossilization seem to vary according to the language itself, the environment and the language learners/users as such. To neutralise the differences in question, the author of the thesis compiled a list of fossilization indicators based on the discourse-type and its significant features to be found most troublesome for language learners and users in general.

The source of the problems can be traced back to the IL development, where the place of fossilization is hinted at with respect to particular developmental stages. What seems convincing for the author of the work is a widely-held statement that language stabilization is a prelude to fossilization.

What it results in can be referred to as devastating effects on the language. As has been proved, the knowledge of the language is decreased or, in many a case, erased at all. Both comprehension and production competence are diminished. The quality of performance is substantially reduced, it being reflected in low fluency, linguistic inaccuracy, as well as a basic level of communicative competence, or being, by any means, communicatively incompetent in a given target language.

Varying degrees of fossilization, as well as changes it undergoes over the long haul have inclined the author of the thesis to reject customary approaches to the very phenomenon, conceiving of it as, for example, a permanent state, a steady state or state of incompleteness. Instead, the attitude to fossilization supported in this study concurs with Lemke's (2000; after Larsen-Freeman 2006: 196) claim, saying that

'(...) at any given time, speakers have speech repertoires that are heterochronous, practices and forms considered typical of many earlier and later stages co-exist and interact and are differentially produced in different contexts'.

Dynamism and modularity the quotation pinpoints with respect to fossilization seem to constitute the immediate reasons for examining the process in question. The assumption is that it "goes" in stages, fluctuates and changes with time. Under this view, it is a longitudinal study that is likely to verify the hypothesis in question, and give evidence of the stages of fossilization, as well as its characteristic features. These, in turn, apart from showing the scale of the problem, and representations of fossilization, are expected to sensitise FL learners and teachers to language tendencies symptomatic of fossilization at each stage, and, at least to

some extent, help them diagnose their language competences, eradicate already-identified symptoms of fossilization and/or prevent them from happening in the future.

CHAPTER III

LONGITUDINAL STUDIES ON FOSSILIZATION IN ADVANCED LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND USERS

1. Introduction

Bearing in mind the complexity and specificity of the phenomenon of fossilization discussed in the previous chapter, there is no doubt that the very task of approaching the problem of fossilization has never been considered easy. Usually, the difficulties arise with the so called “distinctive features” ascribed to fossilization in L2 acquisition, the commonest of which involve a dynamic nature, inevitability, and irreversibility of the phenomenon in question. The characteristic features, at the same time, reflect the intricate nature of the interlanguage development, and determine the effect each of them exerts on the language learning and teaching process, especially evident in the case of those language learners and users with a severely restricted access to L2 input.

For the reasons as above, any attempt to investigate the phenomenon of fossilization is to constitute a carefully designed longitudinal study on the same individual(s) following IL development and/or lack of it in a variety of discourse domains, and at various intervals over a lengthy time-period (Selinker & Lamendella 1993). Such an approach is believed to provide a thorough description of IL (in)stability considered to be one of the determinants of fossilization, and eventually, give evidence of the process under investigation in all its manifestations.

2. Studies on fossilization

As it was a common practice in the case of the already conducted studies of fossilization (Table 3.1), the findings led to either *fossilization assumed* or *fossilization established*. The former one is highly observational. The evidence is alleged and not valid unless sustained by similar evidence, from a number of representative domains. The latter, on the contrary, stems from longitudinal examination, and does not search for any evidence as it already exists, conclusive and incontrovertible.

Researcher	Informants' L1	Informants' TL	Linguistic focus	Type of study	Fossilization assumed or established
Schumann (1978a)	Spanish	English	Negation	One-year longitudinal case study	Established
Lardiere (1998a)	Chinese	English	Pronominal marking and past tense marking	Eight-year longitudinal case study	Established
Kellerman (1989)	Dutch	English	Hypothetical conditionals	Non-longitudinal, cross-sectional study	Assumed
Schouten (1996)	Dutch	English	Hypothetical conditionals	Non-longitudinal, cross-sectional study	Assumed
Hyltenstam (1988)	Finnish, Spanish	Swedish	Swedish lexical density, variation and sophistication	Non-longitudinal, group study	Assumed
Lennon (1991)	German	English	English adverb order, 'there is/ there are', 'have got', 'always', future time forms	Six-month longitudinal case study	Established
Thiep-Ackrapong (1990)	Chinese	English	English infinitival complements and related structures	A-year-and-a-half longitudinal case study	Assumed
Mukattash (1986)	Arabic	English	Conflation of simple past tense with simple present; conflation of non-perfective phrases with the perfective; be-deletion; using the active voice instead of the passive	Sixteen-week longitudinal, group study	Established
Washburn (1991)	Miscellaneous	English	Characteristics of linguistic behavior	Non-longitudinal, group study	Assumed
Han (1998)	Chinese	English	Passives; unaccusatives	Two-year longitudinal case study (2 subjects)	Established
Long (2002)	Japanese	English	Plural -s marking; past time marking	Sixteen-year longitudinal case study	Established

Table 3.1. Empirical studies of fossilization (Han 2004: 107ff.)

As it emerges from the above overview of empirical research on fossilization to date, none of the studies carried out so far have provided any evidence on the fossilization of an entire interlanguage system. Rather, they have each identified one or more features of the interlanguage that appeared to have fossilized. Although syntax, lexis and phonology have long constituted the research focus irrespective of the source language, the target language, and the language context a FL user is exposed to, a vast majority of the studies conducted have been syntax-centred. This syntactic focus, among other things, has covered negations, conditionals, the adverb order, passive constructions, as well as plural and past time marking studied of yet. Lexis,

for instance, has so far been investigated at the level of lexical density, reflected in variation and sophistication. Following the results from the studies in question, negations, passives, adverbs as well as plural and past time marking have accumulated irrefutable evidence of established fossilization. The studies of lexical density and conditional sentences, however, have brought a body of insufficient evidence, allowing for merely assumptions about fossilization to be made. This can only prove a very high validity of a longitudinal study, and give the reason to make use of it.

3. Description of the research design

In the course of the research design presented in this chapter, the aim of the study was established, the research questions were formulated, and, accordingly, the research scheme was prepared. Having introduced the information on the method used, the participants of the study were described, the research tools were discussed, and the course of the study was outlined.

3.1. Purpose of the study

The study in focus constituted an attempt to distinguish stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English as a FL. The research undertaken centred upon the linguistic behaviour, and provided a deep insight into the already mentioned (in)stability of the language competence and performance in advanced language learners and users of English. Not only was investigating the subjects' perceptions and self-assessment of their language competence the aim of the research proper, but, most importantly, examining correct and incorrect language forms giving rise to fossilization, as well as observing the areas of language change, and its impact on the quality of IL over a given period of time.

On the basis of a careful analysis of the language samples produced, the study attempted at indicating fossilized language features specific to the subjects under investigation. Basing on the exact instances of the language (in)stability involving the abundance of patterns of language (ir)regularities observed, the frequency of occurrence, and/or their (in)existence at an advanced level, the study aimed to identify particular stages of fossilization, and enumerate its distinctive features common to each of the phases differentiated.

3.2. Research questions

In approaching the area of inquiry introduced above, a multitude of research questions arose. The most fundamental one referred to the stages of fossilization as such, and was worded as:

- What specific stages of fossilization can be detected in advanced learners and users of English as a FL?

Consequently, in connection with determinants of each of the stages of fossilization, more searching questions were formulated, namely:

- What are the criteria on the basis of which the stages in question are differentiated?
- What are the characteristic features of a given stage of fossilization?

Having introduced the point of departure for the core issue of the study, a series of the so called peripheral questions came into being. They were related to manifestations and symptoms of fossilization, and were the following:

- What are the indicators of fossilization as such?
- What is the proportion of correct and incorrect language forms manifested at a particular stage?
- Which symptoms of fossilization persist/desist over time?
- Which symptoms of fossilization increase and/or decrease with time?

What followed was the question of a whole array of factors affecting language progression/ regression, namely:

- What are the factors facilitating and hindering the process of fossilization?

In final, the issue of fossilization seen from the subjects' perspective was addressed. It constituted the attempt to examine the extent to which the subjects were fossilization (un)aware, as well as the extent to which their language fossilized. The questions formulated at this point served the purpose of a closing consideration put forward as:

- Are the advanced language learners and users aware of the problem of language fossilization?
- How do the subjects perceive their command of English?
- Does the subjects' self-assessment of their linguistic competence correspond with the outcomes received from their actual language performance?

Given careful thought, all the points made above, whether it be a leading or peripheral question, turned out to be of direct relevance to the subject of inquiry. In

consequence, the process of data collection supported by a sequence of interrelated research questions greatly contributed to a comprehensive account of the nature of fossilization in the sample selected.

3.3. Research scheme

Intended to identify and describe the stages of fossilization, the research took on the form of a longitudinal diagnostic study. This type of method observes a particular population over a certain period of time, and has an advantage of seeing how the language can change, on the basis of the quantitative and qualitative differences between particular measurements. Bearing in mind the fact that, as Komorowska (1982) has it, the research involving several measurements is a more useful and reliable way of gathering data than the one in which just one measurement is used, the study in question rested on three separate measurements within a 12-month period. Each time, the language produced by the group examined, i.e. the oral and written text samples, was looked at from the perspective of the extent and scope of fossilization syndromes, them being defined in accordance with the list of the indicators of fossilization distinguished by the author of the thesis for the purposes of the project. The very inventory was created on the basis of the most significant behavioural reflexes of fossilization reported on in the literature of the subject (Chapter I and Chapter II).

3.3.1. Fossilization indicators

By indicators of fossilization were meant verbal and non-verbal modes of expression indicative of the phenomenon under discussion in speaking and writing. The choice of the above-mentioned was dictated by the aim of the study, and the type of research tools, i.e. investigating oral and written fossilization, and the use of oral and written text samples respectively. The author of the thesis looked for the means of examining the language from the perspective of the characteristics of both types of discourse, among them being fluency, accuracy and text coherence. The criteria in question contributed to the selection of such indicators which did not only reflect the features of a spoken and written language variety, but, first and foremost, allowed for a distinction of the so called oral and written symptoms of fossilised language competence, and enabled the analysis of the scope and extent of language fossilization. What is more, the (non)appearance of particular fossilization indicators in the course of the measurement of language production was presumed to be indicative of a given stage of fossilization, and, at the same time, characterise it.

ORAL INDICATORS OF FOSSILIZATION	WRITTEN INDICATORS OF FOSSILIZATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ungrammatical units ➤ Wrong words/phrases ➤ Non-existent lexemes ➤ Ill-formed words ➤ Wrong pronunciation ➤ Final and filled pauses ➤ Fillers ➤ Repetitions ➤ False starts (reformulations) ➤ Unfinished words/phrases ➤ Overreliance on certain structures ➤ Overuse of discourse markers ➤ Redundant categories ➤ Meaningless expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ungrammatical units ➤ Wrong words/phrases ➤ Non-existent lexemes ➤ Ill-formed words ➤ Wrong spelling ➤ Wrong punctuation ➤ Fillers ➤ Repetitions ➤ False starts (reformulations) ➤ Unfinished words/phrases ➤ Overreliance on certain structures ➤ Overuse of discourse markers ➤ Redundant categories ➤ Meaningless expressions

Table 3.2. Fossilization indicators

Despite the two-fold division hinted at above, a large number of fossilization indicators turned out to be common to both types of discourses. The first of them, referred to as ungrammatical units, stood for any strings of the language, from single words to whole sentences which were grammatically unacceptable being ill-combined, mis-ordered, or wrongly realized. Wrong words/phrases covered both the wrong word class usage, and inaccuracies within the same word category, as well as wrong “intra-phrasal” and “intra-expressional” links. Non-existent lexemes, accordingly, were related to the use of lexis untypical and unexclusive of the L2 system. Ill-formed words, on the other hand, reflected those lexical items which did not conform to the word formation rules, resulting in wrong prefixes and/or suffixes. Fillers were composed of all-purpose words, ranging from both correct and incorrect one- and two-word utterances to longer units, being interludes and discourse “enhancers” and/or discourse maintenance devices at the same time. Repetitions included those fragments of language consisting in erroneous and non-erroneous doubled, tripled or quadrupled elements produced successively or between words. False starts, or reformulations, encompassed the attempts to rephrase already vocalised or written down utterances, resulting in self-repairs and/or dis-repairs. Unfinished words/phrases referred to any pieces of speaking or writing which were not completed. Overreliance on certain structures consisted in the overuse and

overproduction of both appropriate and inappropriate fixed expressions and grammatical units as such. Overuse of discourse markers, be it grammatically acceptable units or not, was equal with a chaotic nature and text disorganization in reception of different phases of a given discourse, and the discourse as a whole as well. Redundant categories reflected those language items considered irrelevant, unrelated and linguistically unjustified in a given context. Last but not least, meaningless, though not necessarily incorrect, expressions were to be found in any strings of the language perceived as pointless, useless and/or incomprehensible.

What differentiated the oral indicators of fossilization from the written ones constituted wrong pronunciation, and final as well as filled pauses taken into account in the case of the oral speech production, and wrong spelling in tandem with wrong punctuation rated as regards the written responses. Wrong pronunciation included single phoneme and word stress difficulties realized at the segmental and suprasegmental level. Final pauses related to the situations in which the performance was stopped and not “restarted” by the speaker. Filled pauses, as opposed to silent ones, constituted vocalised expressions made of such sounds as “filling noises” or hesitations. Wrong spelling covered wrong letters, wrongly ordered letters, instances of too many or too few letters in a word, or cases of the so called “(in)word separation”. Finally, wrong punctuation rested on the omission of punctuation marks, preponderance being given to apostrophes.

3.3.2. Pilot study

Prior to the application of the above-enumerated indicators into an extensive investigation into fossilization, and the onset of the examination proper, a pilot study was conducted. Its purpose was two-fold. First of all, it aimed at testing the research tools, and secondly, it intended to record marked tendencies attesting to fossilization the students prominently displayed.

A trial sample was found among 5th year extramural students at the Department of English at the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. The sample consisted of 13 subjects (11 female and 2 male students). The group was homogeneous both in terms of their language competence, teaching experience as well as their formal instruction background in the language.

The procedures the subjects were instructed to follow involved a language test to take, a questionnaire to fill in, as well as oral and written discourses to produce. The time allocated to the language test and questionnaire completion was

fixed and constituted 45 minutes in each case. Oral discourses, which took the form of a comment-on-the-statement activity, constituted 3-minute responses elicited from each of the respondents. Written assignments resembled the oral ones, with the exception of the mode of language used by the subjects, and time devoted to their completion. At this point, the sample was instructed to comment on the statement in writing within the prescribed time of 15 minutes.

3.3.3. Conclusions for the body proper

The data gathered showed that the pilot study served its purpose. The database, in line with expectations, revealed a tendency among the group examined for numerous repetitions, article omission, preposition misuse and pronunciation difficulties in oral performance. Additionally, 2 of the participants failed to do the task, on the grounds of too incomprehensible and difficult a quotation to discuss. In writing, however, the subjects performed much better, making non-systematic mistakes categorised as wrong word and/or wrong word order.

Apart from monitoring the quality of the language produced by the sample, the pilot study verified practicability and reliability of the research tools. It pointed out the necessity to include several improvements in the conditions of the research proper, namely realistic timing with regards to the test, questionnaire and task accomplishment, comprehensibility of the instructions, test items and adequacy of the task to the average subject.

In consequence, the amount of time devoted to the questionnaire completion was prolonged to 60 minutes, on account of the majority of the trial sample short of time within the period of 45 minutes. In the same way, the writing task was extended from 15 to 30 minutes, mainly because of comparatively short and fragmented responses the respondents produced, often reaching 2 sentences or a maximum of 72 words. The range of topics was re-considered and re-selected so that the level of abstractness of the ideas reflected in the topics was similar and unified. The number remained the same, being 100.

3.4. Subjects

Having introduced all the necessary changes, the participants of the research proper were selected. The sample was drawn from the population of 5th year students attending extramural studies at the English Department at the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. The choice of respondents taking part in the research proper was intentional, and, among other things, dictated by the outcomes of the language test

administered at the onset of the study. Since the study had a very pronounced focus on the advanced level students, the stringent selection criterion amounted to a total of 60 % and above. Out of 149 students who were given a test, only a small proportion of test-takers (58 altogether) reached the minimum required test score:

Test results (percentage bracket)	Number of subjects
30 – 39%	9
40 - 49%	11
50 – 59%	71
60 – 69%	32
70 – 79%	25
80 % and above	1

Table 3.3 Placement test results

As seen from the table, the results ranged from the 30 – 39% to 80% and above outcome bracket. The extremes were poorly represented by the subjects; 9 of them reaching the score of 38%, and 1 scoring 86%. What seemed extremely “popular”, on the other hand, was a 50% success on a test. Deriving from the figures, as many as 71 respondents obtained between 50 and 59%, reducing, at the same time, the research sample to the population of 58 students.

Further on, it was learning and teaching experience already gained by the students that constituted a second-rate criterion in the sample selection. On closer analysis, the learning as well as teaching history consisted in two different types of experiences, prominence being given to the latter one. The data collected at this particular point related not only to the personal details, the amount of time devoted to learning/teaching English per week, types of institutions attended, and number of classes taught, but also the reasons for learning/teaching English, as well as evaluation of the first English lesson attended and conducted by the subjects.

As far as the personal data is concerned, the sample was composed of 51 female and 7 male students, aged 23-45. The group was fairly homogeneous in terms of the qualifications obtained, i.e. 53 BA degrees in English Studies, with an exception of 4 respondents holding an MA degree in Early School Education, and 1

person having master’s degree in Environmental Protection. However, the subjects differed to a large extent with respect to their learning and teaching history.

The learning history concerned, first of all, the length of learning English. Here, the information collected from the subjects allowed for a tripartite distinction, reflecting length-of-time categories, such as :

Length of learning English	Number of subjects
Below 10 years	11
10-15 years	37
20 years and above	10

Table 3.4. Length of learning experience

As the figures show, the majority of the informants (37 in total) had a long learning history covering the period of 10-15 years. The remaining students were equally placed in two extremes labeled as “below 10” and “above 20 years”, represented by 11 and 10 of them respectively.

The process of learning the subjects underwent prior to their university education, involved the formal instruction, namely the institution of school. A typical classroom environment, however, was the only source of learning English in the case of 2 informants. A large proportion of students (31) admitted having an opportunity to supplement the instruction at school with private English lessons. Second-rated was school in line with evening courses singled out by the group of 15 students. Last but not least, a combination of school, private lessons and evening courses was listed by 10 people (Table 3.5):

PLACE OF LEARNING ENGLISH	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS
SCHOOL ONLY	2
SCHOOL & PRIVATE LESSONS	31
SCHOOL & EVENING COURSES	15
SCHOOL, PRIVATE LESSONS & EVENING COURSES	10

Table 3.5. Type of learning experience

As regards the reasons for learning English, the data gathered allowed for a division of the questioned subjects into those learning the language because of a must and school requirements (44 of the respondents in total), and the ones mastering English “for their own sake or interest”, the latter being represented by 14 students.

The students’ attitude towards learning the language presented above was reflected in the number of hours they spent learning English per week. Those with a positive attitude claimed to devote 5 hours to English on average. The group considering itself negative and reluctant to learn admitted spending 1 to 2 hours a week having anything to do with English .

Comparatively justified were the reasons the subjects under investigation listed for studying English at the university level. In their choice of studies, it was the institution/work requirements that preponderated, and were pointed out by 41 students. Another 10 stated no reasons, and merely 7 students considered themselves really interested in the language itself, and it was their great interest in the TL and TLC that prevailed in the choice of their studies.

Teaching history, analogous to the learning history previously discussed, showed, among other things, the length of teaching experience the subjects had:

LENGTH OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS
5 years and below	29
6-10 years	16
11-15 years	10
none	3

Table 3.6 Length of teaching experience

As it emerges from the table, the subjects’ teaching experience fell into four categories. 29 of the examined students appeared to have been teaching English for a maximum of 5 years. 16 of them claimed to have been working in their field for 6 to 10 years. Only 10 people were more experienced, their teaching practice amounting to 11 to 15 years. And 3 of the respondents had no experience in teaching at all, whether it be private tutorials, evening courses or the institution of school.

When asked about their place of work and type of English courses taught within the last two years, the subjects’ responses overlapped, clearly indicating their professional commitments:

TYPE OF ENGLISH COURSE TAUGHT/ PLACE OF WORK	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS
PRIMARY SCHOOL	29
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	16
SECONDARY SCHOOL	10
PRIVATE CLASSES	55

Table 3 7 Type of teaching experience

As can readily be seen, all of the students, except those having no teaching experience at all, appeared to have been giving private lessons. The largest proportion of them constituted primary school teachers. Second-rated was the institution of the junior high school, and as many as 10 informants listed the secondary school environment being their place of work on a regular basis.

Regarding the number of English classes conducted per week, the average amount of time spent teaching the language ranged from 20 to 25 hours, which is 4 to 5 lessons daily. None of the informants disclosed any information on the number of private classes they taught outside the school environment, so the issue of private tutorials remained unsolved.

As far as the school environment is concerned, the last but one question in the questionnaire concerned the subject’s self-evaluation of the first English lesson given. Here, the majority of the respondents (50 of them altogether) perceived the first lesson conducted as a negative experience. They would describe their “performance” as disastrous, a complete disaster or failure. In contrast to this opinion reacted 8 subjects, emphasizing a high level of satisfaction they had of making things right.

Similarly, in the section devoted to reasons for being an English teacher, 8 people highlighted great pleasure they took in teaching, or referred to teaching English as their hobby. A vast majority of the questioned subjects (46) treated teaching English as merely the source of money, and 2 people admitted having no

particular reason for teaching the language. Simply, “they have been doing it because there’s little else on offer”.

Given a brief characteristic of the subjects investigated, the main assumption behind a sample selection should be disclosed. It was based on a strong conviction that the subjects’ individual learning and teaching experiences influence the process of language progression and/or regression to a varying degree. Let alone students’ attitudes towards learning and teaching English shaped by their first direct encounter with English, and circumstances under which they started their language education. Last but not least, as the aim of the study was to examine language fossilization at an advanced level, it was assumed that university students, being highly proficient in the FL, would constitute a properly representative sample, substantially contributing to an in-depth study into the stages of fossilization in advanced language learners/users. What is more, it was believed that the subjects’ learning and teaching experiences would make it possible to approach and investigate the problem of fossilization from the perspective of a FL learner and FL teacher.

3.5. Research tools

The data were collected by means of the language test, questionnaire, and text samples produced by the subjects under investigation.

3.5.1. Language test

Following a classification of types of language tests put forward by Hughes (1989) and Komorowska (1993, 2002), placement tests, as the name suggests, are used to place students in a programme, be it a language course, research study or job interview, or in a certain level of a programme. Being distributed among a group, tests can elicit information from a number of people at the same time, and within a relatively short time-period. Bearing in mind the purpose of the placement test, and the time-saving quality ascribed to the language test as a tool in general, it was used to select a population of students taking part in the research proper.

As regards the test structure, it was composed of 100 multiple-choice test items, each made up of four options from which the testees were required to circle the correct one and only one (see Appendix 1). To do so, they were given a 45-minute time limit.

As far as the content of the test is concerned, it contained grammar, vocabulary and culture entries. To be more specific, the grammar items (35 in total) were divided into 4 sections. They constituted:

- phrasal verbs (10 items),
- prepositions (5 items),
- word formation (5 items), and
- grammar structures (15 items).

The lexical part comprised 47 items altogether. This time, the students' task was to choose the right answer with respect to:

- collocations (22 items),
- synonyms and antonyms (18 items),
- idiomatic expressions (4 items), and
- false friends (3 items).

In the end, the subjects under investigation were confronted with a set of 18 statements devoted to the socio-cultural issues concerning both the United Kingdom and the United States of America. In particular, to this type referred all the questions concerned with:

- literature (6 items),
- geography (3 items),
- politics (5 items), and
- history (4 items).

Irrespective of the test section, the key assumption behind the item selection was that the respondents were presented with different levels of difficulty, often from the easiest to most complex language items. Basing on it, the students were provided with both content and level variety, the latter ranging from elementary to advanced. Those who met the expectations set up by the placement test, proceeded to the subsequent part of the research proper, i.e. a questionnaire.

3.5.2. Questionnaire

Since a questionnaire is referred to as a reliable and fast source of collecting information about a particular subject or subjects (Genesee and Upshur, 1996; Maszke, 2004), it constituted a tool handy in this work, and was used to construct a profile of the group examined. More to the point, both the factual information concerning individual subjects, as well as a subjective account of their learning and teaching experiences were of interest to the study (see Appendix 2 and 3).

Part I, entitled *Background information*, was designed to gain personal data on each of the subjects involved. In most cases, the students were asked to answer

open-ended questions on age, sex, time-periods of learning and teaching English, and reasons why they have chosen to learn and teach the language.

Part II, that is *Learning and teaching experiences*, was divided into eight interrelated sections, and aimed at gathering information corresponding to subjects' self-assessment of their command of English. It consisted in a series of open-ended and closed questions under the following headings:

- Learning outcomes,
- Evaluation of the English language material learnt,
- Learning preferences,
- Mistakes and language problems,
- Language habits,
- Exposure to input,
- Fossilization,
- Language achievement and language failure.

When it comes to the *Learning outcomes* section, the respondents' task was, as the name suggests, to evaluate their learning outcomes, placing an emphasis on any changes observed in their linguistic competence. Accordingly, the students were expected to take a critical stance on the above-mentioned changes, and present their impressions on a four-point scale, where 2 stood for negative, 3 meant mediocre, 4 was good, and 5 equaled very good.

Next, in the part devoted to the *Learning material*, the students were requested to assess levels of difficulty of the English language material. More precisely, a list of specific questions was made so as to identify and specify the language areas the students considered easy and difficult. Furthermore, they were asked to assess their reading, speaking, writing, and listening skills using another four-point scale, covering the marks the subjects in question received for a particular skill, where 2 corresponded to an unsatisfactory mark and 5 reflected a very good grade.

The subsequent section, called *Learning preferences*, dealt with students' predilections for a type of language activities. This time, the informants were supposed to grade their likes and dislikes in connection with language skills, language subsystems and types of discourse provided.

What followed was a section referred to as *Mistakes and language problems*. Here, the subjects were faced with the question meant to pinpoint their attitude to

language mistakes from a learner and teacher perspective. Aside from this, the informants under investigation were expected to report on the frequency and sort of mistakes committed by them and their students in the learning context, namely speaking and writing.

Further on, in a one-statement part of the questionnaire devoted to *Language habits*, the students were required to specify their routine behaviour when using English.

Subsequently, the *Exposure to input* section inquired about forms of contact with the English language outside work and school environment. Secondly, the subjects were asked to provide the examples of any kinds of their individual work on mastering the language.

Given a thought to the previously stated questions, the subjects were confronted with the phenomenon of *fossilization* alone. In the first place, the task prepared for them encapsulated a brief definition of fossilization as such, a short list of symptoms and determinants of fossilization, and factors responsible for the process in question. Secondly, the group examined was expected to respond to a set of questions investigating the subjects' personal attitude to fossilization, evidence for fossilization in their interlanguage included. Thirdly, the group was supposed to provide examples of measures taken to prevent fossilization widely-used in the position of a learner and teacher.

The last part of the questionnaire concentrated on *Language achievements* and *language failure*, and contributed to a set of instances of *language success* and *failure* enlisted by the respondents. Accordingly, the subjects were to complete the already-made statements referring to language aspects they perceived themselves particularly good and bad at.

Although all the information gathered at this stage, as well as data on language mistakes, language problems and language habits seemed fairly reliable and exhaustive, it was highly theoretical in fact, and asked for empirical verification consisting in comparisons between the subjects' "performance" on the questionnaire and their actual command of English. The examination of subjects' actual performance in English was organised around text samples attended to in the empirical part of the study.

3.5.3. Text samples

Text samples, which constituted the main source of the language material produced by the sample selected (58 respondents altogether) and, henceforth, the main point of reference in the research proper, were divided into oral and written assignments. What lied behind the choice of this particular research tool was, as Wallace (1998) claims, the quality encapsulated in a large database of information on both quantitative and qualitative features playing the role of the indicators of fossilization ascribed to the oral and written speech corpus. Whether it be an oral discourse or a piece of writing, the activity aimed at gathering samples of students' actual performance in the first place, and examining the received language material for fossilization in the second. In both cases, the tasks the questioned subjects were confronted with covered a topic for discussion randomly chosen from a list of 100 quotations singled out for the purposes of the study (see Appendix 4).

As regards oral assignments, they focused on students' oral performance and were designed to record samples of the language output produced by the informants in the course of speaking. More specifically, the respondents were required to comment on one of the statements drawn from the list of quotations given (see Appendix 4). Each time, the responses recorded were intended to mirror the students' 3 minute spontaneous reactions to the topic.

As opposed to oral assignments, written tasks were centred upon examining a written discourse produced by the group under investigation. This time, each of the questioned students was asked to pick a slip of paper containing a topic for discussion. Having selected one of the quotations at a time, they were requested to remark on the issues in focus in writing, given a 30-minute time-limit on every occasion.

3.6. The course of the study

The research started in October 2005 with the implementation of the pilot study and it was not until October 2006 when it was completed with the third measurement within the scope of the study proper. As it is a common experience in the case of longitudinal studies, the research took on the form of the so called "repeated monitoring". This involved 3 measurements taken at regular intervals of a four-month period, being December, May and October respectively.

Supplemented with the questionnaire, the study took on the whole new dimension. The questionnaire in focus allowed for gathering data on subjects'

perceptions of fossilization and self-evaluation of their language competence, the results of which constituted the basis for comparison and verification with the empirical evidence on fossilization.

To be more precise, the questionnaire stage, which did not exceed 45 minutes set aside, provided information on personal background (Part I) and evaluation of learning and teaching experiences, prominence being given to determinants of fossilization (Part II).

The sample text stage, on the other hand, moved from the realm of theory into the sphere of practice. The data derived from this particular stage vastly increased the author's knowledge of the subjects' language competence owing to the already-mentioned measurements of the subjects' actual performance in speaking and writing. The measurements in question were carried out on 3 occasions, each taking the form of an oral and written performance. Having recorded the students' 3-minute responses stimulated by a fixed set of quotations and topics for discussion, the subjects were asked to cover the issue in writing within the 30-minute time-limit. To avoid duplication of choice and effort, the students were allotted codes in the form of cardinal numbers placed next to the list of quotations prior to every single topic selection. Each time, the measures presented above were equally adopted.

In the case of the first measurement, all 58 students were present and followed the procedures of topic selection. Although the above-stated did select the subject of discussion, 8 of them refused to perform the task in speaking for no apparent reasons. Essentially, none of these problems occurred in the written part, and all 58 subjects completed the assignment. The only difficulty the sample encountered when carrying out the task lied in the lack of information on the form and length of a piece of writing they were supposed to produce. The task instruction however, was incomplete and limited for the purposes of the study. It was assumed that a high degree of uniformity in task procedures would guarantee task reliability and, consequently, data comprehensibility. That is why the subjects were not given any details but the time-limit, no matter if they were about to speak or comment on the issue in question in writing.

At the time of the second measurement the sample comprised 57 students. One person had been awarded a scholarship and left for the United States of America. This particular stage of research seemed to be less problematic for the group examined. Apparently, the students must have remembered the procedures of

the previous tasks. They asked no questions and, generally speaking, were eager to cooperate. The subjects' attitude translated into numbers. Only 2 people appeared reluctant to participate in the oral task procedures. The written assignments, on the other hand, were attended to without exception.

When it comes to the third measurement, the sample size remained unchanged and consisted of 57 informants. Similarly, a constant number remained with respect to the population producing the written discourse (57 in total). Again, oral performance was not equally representative because 6 subjects did not react to the topic. This lack of subjects' performance was the only problem here.

Given the oral and written text samples, the outcomes of the students' language production were carefully analysed and examined for language fossilization on the basis of the (non)appearance of fossilization indicators. The subjects' oral responses were interpreted in terms of accuracy and fluency of speech operating on phonological, syntactic and semantic components. The written discourses, on the other hand, were investigated with reference to accuracy and text cohesion, the former being composed of lexical, grammatical, spelling and punctuation elements, the latter making use of intersentential and intrasentential links. The above-mentioned criteria constituted the source of reference when detecting the symptoms of fossilization. A number of occurrences and degree of persistence were indicative and evaluative of the stages of fossilization among the advanced language learners and users. The qualitative analysis of the above-stated contributed to a thorough description of each of the stages distinguished.

4. Recapitulation

To sum up, the main focus of this chapter was on a scheme of a longitudinal diagnostic study purported to distinguish stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English as a FL. For a start, a general overview of the empirical studies of fossilization to date was outlined, with an emphasis on the type, aim and linguistic scope each of the above-mentioned was organised around. Given the evidence of fossilization as a largely observational phenomenon, a detailed description of the research followed. It contained an introductory comment on the purpose of the study, and presentation of the research questions. Building on the results of the pilot study, the scheme of the research proper was designed, the subject description was provided, the choice of instrumentation was justified, and the research tool implementation was discussed.

CHAPTER IV

LEARNING AND TEACHING EXPERIENCES: PRESENTATION OF STUDY RESULTS

1. Scheme of data presentation

This chapter's coverage is restricted to the presentation of data deriving from the questionnaire aimed at investigating the subjects' learning and teaching experiences. The results under discussion are presented in a quantitative and qualitative manner. The former reflects the population quota with respect to a given learning and teaching situation, and shows proportions the subjects' responses reached in percentage figures and numbers. The latter, on the other hand, consists in quotations and/or paraphrase of subjects' comments, opinions and interpretations provided in the light of a wide array of issues. These, in the order introduced in the questionnaire administered to the research sample, and discussed below, involve the subjects' perception of their learning outcomes, evaluation of the scale of problems the English language material presents for them, and their learning preferences. What follows is a brief sub-section on language mistakes and language problems the respondents encounter when learning and teaching English, and an account of language habits they are aware of. As the quality of the interlanguage is determined by the amount of contact with the TL, a discussion on subjects' exposure to input opens in succession. Subsequently, the issue of fossilization is covered, prominence being given to the students' awareness of the factors conducive to fossilization, measures taken to prevent it, and symptoms of fossilization observed by the sample. Last but not least, examples of language achievement and language failure experienced by the informants are described, and conclusive remarks on the subjects' perceived language competence, and its relation to fossilization are offered.

2. Learning outcomes

As learning outcomes are widely known to be one of the determinants of the students' work on the language, they constituted an overture to the discussion on the evaluation of learning experiences. Confronted with the first two questions concerning the level of satisfaction taken from the current and past learning

outcomes, a vast majority of the respondents (95%) reacted in a very positive manner.

As regards the present learning outcomes, those adopting a positive stance on their learning process (Figure 4.1) supported their attitude saying “ I can see the real results and I have great motivation to be better”, “ I am satisfied because I feel I make progress” or “ So far I’ve managed to pass all the exams required to do my job”.

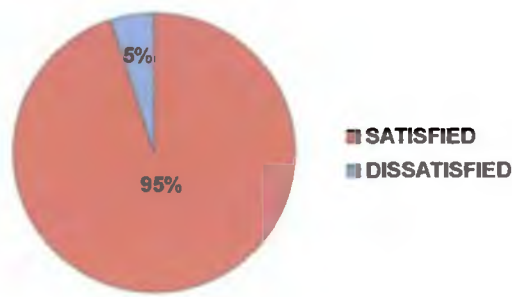


Fig. 4.1. Evaluation of current learning outcomes

The remaining 5% of the informants, labeled as dissatisfied with their results, stressed the fact that “they could be better” and, at the same time, complained about having little time for practising, and making use of learning by heart exclusively.

In the case of the past, which covered the period of the last 2 years, the proportion of the students contented and discontented with their marks in English was identical to the percentage numbers displayed with respect to the results of their present work on the language. Again, 95% of the questioned subjects turned out to deliver good judgements and high opinions about learning outcomes. Undeniably, in contrast to this opinion remained those unhappy about the outcomes of their previous learning experience, treating lack of learning experience, stressful atmosphere at school, and bad teaching as the main source of their dissatisfaction.

When asked about changes in their language competence within the last 2 years, the subjects enumerated a number of positive and negative linguistic changes observed in their interlanguage system. About 95% of the respondents showed signs of improvements, from general remarks like “shifting from advanced level to proficiency level activities in their self-study”, to a more-detailed description covering better comprehension, sophisticated and new vocabulary, as well as getting more and more fluent in speaking.

Only 3 people (about 5%) considered changes in their language competence regressive in character, stressing the fact that their English had been getting worse. This involved limited vocabulary they based on, incorrect grammar structures they produced, and a strong conviction of merely passive knowledge of the language they represented.

A marked similarity of opinions was observed on a 4-point scale the subjects were requested to make use of and, thereby, evaluate the above-discussed language changes as well as their present-day command of English. Deriving from the information on the scale from 2 to 5, where 2 stood for unsatisfactory, 3 meant satisfactory, 4 was good and 5 equaled very good, 5% of the informants perceived the changes in their language competence as negative or, in other words, disastrous, whereas a high percentage of the sample was satisfied about them (Figure 4.2):

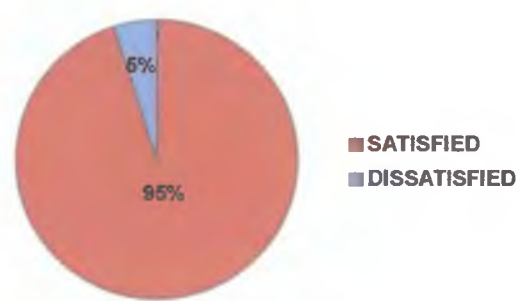


Fig. 4.2. Evaluation of changes in the language

In the same vein, 95% of the subjects pronounced themselves quite satisfied with their current achievements, having chosen 4 on the scale. Only 5% of the questioned students gave a poor score to their present command of English, expressing their negative feelings.

Judging by the results obtained so far, the subjects examined could be described as very optimistic about both their present and past learning experiences. The same could be said about their attitude towards changes in the course of their interlanguage development since any change observed by them was referred to as positive, progressive, and promising.

Having inquired about the students' perception of their language competence as such, a more-detailed analysis of their strengths and weaknesses followed. It consisted of the subjects' evaluation of the English language material, with an

emphasis on the language areas particularly uncomplicated and troublesome for the group under investigation. Additionally, the students were requested to list 3 examples, giving evidence for easiness and difficulty of a specific language item.

3. Evaluation of the English language material learnt

The opening question presented in this section concerned the language areas the students considered relatively easy in English. As the statistics show (Figure 4.3), listening was first-rated. Judging by the number of those “pro listening students” (over 50%), this particular language skill appears to be believed by them as undemanding and effortless. Slightly more demanding, yet still relatively easy for the subjects, was grammar, on account of simple rules the whole grammar system is governed by. In the third place, however, the students pointed to reading, stressing the fact that “once you follow the gist of the text, reading is no hardship but pleasure”.

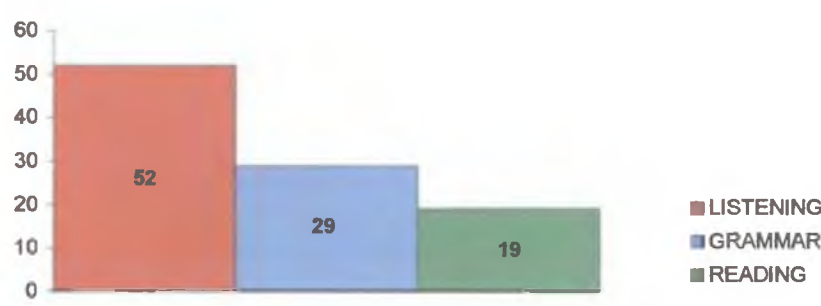


Fig.4.3. Evaluation of the language (easy language areas in general)

What followed was the question searching for language areas in general the sample regarded difficult. This time, a large proportion of the group examined (60% of the respondents) admitted having problems with lexis. Its “infinite range and numerous irregularities” contributed to the classification of vocabulary as most difficult for the majority of the students. The second place was given to writing in ex equo with pronunciation. The former one was considered difficult due to its forms and styles, the latter being perceived as composed of fuzzy rules, or , many a time, based on no rules as such.

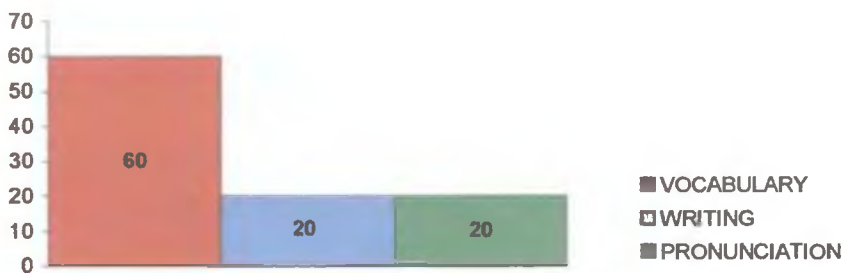


Fig. 4.4 Evaluation of the language (difficult language areas in general)

In addition to the troublesome language areas enumerated by the students, a question on the language aspects to be revised by the students was formulated. The subjects' responses allowed for a tripartite division of the language aspects into those that required extensive, partial and slight revision (Figure 4.5). These three distinction categories, at the same time, reflected a degree of language complexity the subjects identified a particular language item with, i.e. increasingly difficult, quite difficult and a bit difficult.

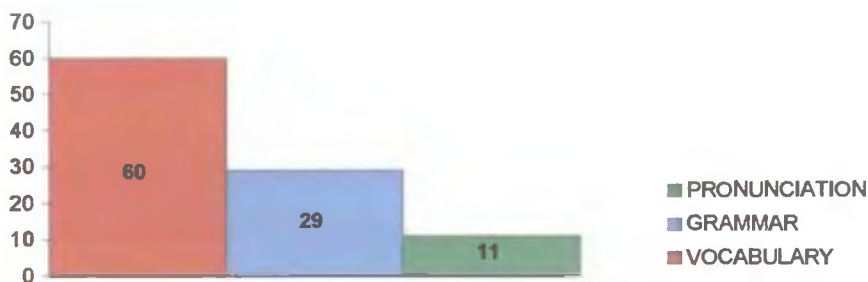


Fig.4.5. Evaluation of the language (language aspects to be revised by the students)

The first category, i.e. the language aspects to be extensively revised by the sample involved vocabulary. More to the point, the subjects (about 60% of them) listed idiomatic phrases and phrasal verbs. The second group, under the label of partial revision, covered grammar, notably prepositions and articles. Finally, the third category, namely those language areas perceived by the informants to be slightly logging behind included pronunciation.

The order in which the language areas were introduced closely corresponds to the findings previously obtained in reference to the evaluation of the language

competence (see Figure 4.4). Hence, it would be not an overstatement to say that the degree of difficulty has its source in the subjects’ lack of knowledge of the foreign language.

Speaking of the degree of difficulty the subjects experienced with reference to the above-discussed language subsystems, there seemed to be no instances of easy vocabulary items in English at all. Those lexical items posing considerable problems for 50% of the respondents included idioms. What appeared to be slightly less problematic was technical vocabulary, owing to students’ wealth of experience in translations made in different fields of science. Lastly, about a 10% worth of the subjects remarked on false friends considered to be misleading, and “hidden traps” they fell into sporadically (Figure 4.6):

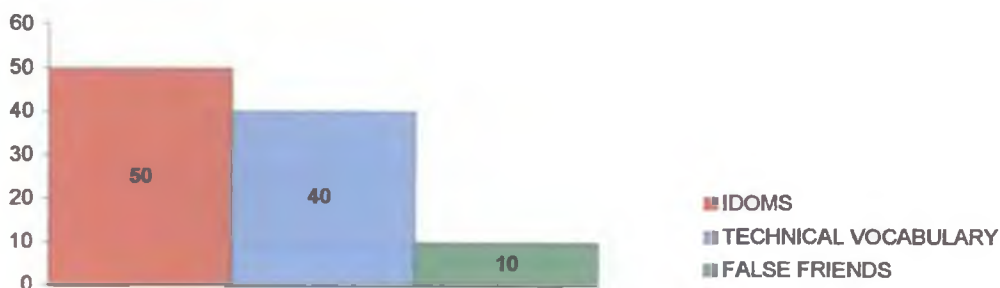


Fig. 4.6. Evaluation of the language (difficult vocabulary)

As regards grammar, the percentage numbers displayed in Figure 4.7 made it clear that the easiest grammar aspects in English comprised tenses:



Fig. 4.7. Evaluation of the language (easy grammar)

The arguments in support of this status quo included constant and, hence, maximum use of grammatical structures, especially that of the present tense. The second place

was given to passive voice, the emphasis being laid on its clear and simple construction rules. 19% of the sample, however, spoke of extreme simplicity of conditionals, the conviction being derived from extensive or, at times, overextensive grammar practice the subjects had undergone in school.

When asked about recurring problems related to grammar, a large number of the subjects (69 % of them) signaled considerable hardships the articles were the source of. Second-rated were prepositions, mainly because of the discrepancies and variance in English and Polish use. Last but not least, 5% of the respondents highlighted the complexity of reported speech, consisting in time sequence and its structure in general.



Fig. 4.8. Evaluation of the language (difficult grammar)

In the case of pronunciation, the subjects did not report on any pronunciation rules they found easy. The language aspects they remarked on, however, seemed to be equally weighted in terms of the difficulties the sample encountered. Accordingly, the examples of difficulty within the scope of phonology encompassed intonation, syllable stress and the “th” sound:



Fig. 4.9. Evaluation of the language (difficult phonology)

The reasons for intonation and stress problems indicated by 36% and 33% of the sample respectively might stem from marked disparities between English and Polish. The source of “th” sound problems, however, is likely to be rooted in L1-L2 discrepancies. Since the consonant itself does not exist in the subjects’ first language, no wonder their attempts to utter the sound correctly are often vain and unsuccessful. Although pronunciation is perceived by the subjects as extremely challenging, and so is vocabulary, the process of mastering the English language is not always a difficult task for the group examined. Following the results obtained from the present study, it is easy for the students to get familiarised with “at least some aspects of grammar”. Apart from present tenses, passive voice and conditionals enumerated within the field, the subjects express positive opinions about listening, treating it as a relatively undemanding task to do in English.

The same explanation, that is easiness and effortlessness, could be presented in relation to morphology. Convincing as it is, the fact that the subjects left the issue of morphological rules unattended may suggest just the opposite. The reason for the status quo could as well derive from the subjects’ unfamiliarity and/or uncertainty about manifestations and scope of morphology the questions referred to.

Given that point of view, a discussion on language skills, listening included, opened automatically. A closer inspection of the data collected at this particular point reflected learners’ high degree of reading proficiency, derived from the proportion of very good and good scores the skill received on the evaluation scale, which was believed to correspond with the marks the students received for reading:

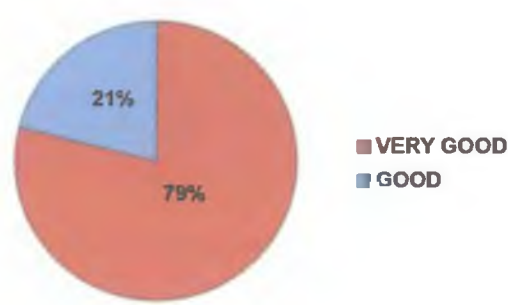


Fig. 4.10. Evaluation of the language (reading)

Not only was students’ reading excellence observed in the language skill evaluation section, but it was partly mentioned by the sample when speaking about easy and

uncomplicated language aspects. Returning momentarily to the comments the group examined made on the subject of the easiness of reading, they all boiled down to a few reading techniques, partial concentration, and very little pre-task preparation on the part of the students.

The same was true of listening. As it emerges from the analysis of the students' evaluation of their listening skills, more than a half of the group examined seemed to maintain their stance presented before, and, invariably, perceived this receptive skill to be by no means difficult. This opinion mirrored the choices made by the respondents on the 4-point scale, i.e. 57% of the subjects being very good at listening and 43% of those good at the very skill. Such a situation can be accounted for the fact that listening, apart from intense concentration and full attention, does not require much preparation on the part of the students. In fact, hardly ever do they rely on the so called global knowledge or the factual knowledge of the English-speaking countries when performing this sort of task.

Certainly, it is not the case with the productive skills, i.e. writing and speaking. Basing on the figures below, both were given relatively low points (Figure 4.11):



Fig. 4.11. Evaluation of the language (writing and speaking)

As much as 59% of the students evaluated their writing and speaking skills choosing a satisfactory option on the scale. Although about 41% of the respondents believed to have mastered the art of writing and speaking to a slightly higher degree, the overall impression obtained from the information provided by the students was that of a certain dose of uncertainty and incompetence they approached this field with. These shortcomings were signaled in their previous evaluation section (Figure

4.4.) in which they highlighted a considerable level of difficulty both writing and speaking caused for them.

Interestingly and surprisingly enough, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) were evaluated in a very positive way:

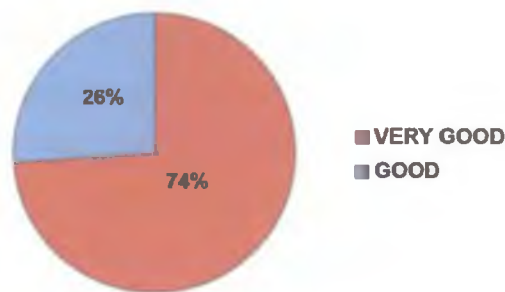


Fig 4.12. Evaluation of the language (BICS)

The students, in large part, believed to be very effective in getting the meaning across when engaged in the tasks not directly related to the learning academic context. Taking into account their previously-noticed speaking problems, it is legitimate to say that they did not have a clue what BICS were, or were inconsistent in their judgements.

A reverse situation, however, could be observed in the case of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP):

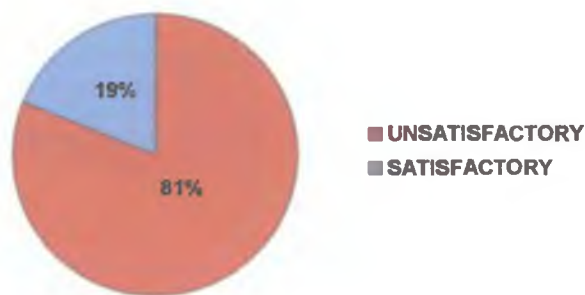


Fig. 4.13. Evaluation of the language (CALP)

Here, the subjects in question labeled their academic skills as unsatisfactory, and the preponderance of the population chose the lowest point on the scale. The reason for their poor performance may be rooted in a variety and combination of

skills in line with language subsystems CALP makes use of. Just to name a few, writing, grammar or reading comprehension are given priority in CALP. No wonder the subjects reported on the problems they regularly encountered since grammar, for example, was previously classified by the respondents as potentially risky or notoriously difficult for them.

Compared with the whole language material discussed in this section, CALP has not been evaluated as something exceptionally difficult for the students under investigation. Considered as problematic are the two productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing. In contrast to the above-stated language skills are reading and listening, regarded as effortless yet time-consuming. In the same way, BICS are among the easiest skills the subjects operate on.

4. Learning preferences

Having identified the extent of subjects’ excellence in language skills, the matter of learning preferences called for a thorough investigation. It took on the form of the table in which types of learning activities were listed. Students’ task consisted in revealing their attitudes to each of the single task category, indicating, at the same time, their positive, negative or neutral position.

Deriving from the table, the most favourable language activities involved, unquestionably, grammar-focused activities in ex equo with vocabulary-based exercises. The second place was given to reading. Pronunciation and listening-oriented tasks, as the statistics show, were classified as the ones the respondents were slightly less positive about and not so thoroughly approving of. Their dislikes constituted speaking and writing. Complete neutrality, accordingly, was shown in conjunction with unplanned and planned activity types.

CATEGORY	LIKE	DISLIKE	NEUTRAL
Speaking activities	19%	81%	-
Writing activities	11%	81%	8%
Listening activities	59%	-	41%
Reading activities	74%	11%	15%
Grammar activities	81%	19%	-
Pronunciation activities	59%	-	41%
Vocabulary activities	81%	19%	-
Planned activities	-	-	100%
Unplanned activities	-	-	100%

Table 4.1. Learning preferences

This round of data closed the part of the questionnaire organized around the language material learnt and learning preferences, the purpose of which was a thorough evaluation of the language itself, language progress/regress, and language preferences. The information gathered produced some interesting results, mainly with respect to problematic and unproblematic language areas in English. As this matter called for a closer investigation, the subsequent questionnaire section dealt with mistakes and language problems in great detail.

5. Mistakes and language problems

For a start, the informants were confronted with the question on their attitude towards language mistakes they tended to commit. Interestingly, their responses reflected great tolerance for mistakes expressed in opinions of all the questioned subjects. Positive remarks were made, most of which were supported with sentences like “Even a native speaker makes mistakes”, “Mistakes are inevitable and I treat them as an inseparable part of my development”, “They are neutral and I am by no means negative about them”. Some further examples of students’ leniency with respect to language erroneous forms they produced were encapsulated in well-known sayings worded as “To err is human” and “Everyone has got the right to make mistakes”.

Further on, the subjects were asked to define their attitude towards language mistakes their students made. The data collected at this point revealed a marked similarity to the previous case, showing a high error tolerance on the part of the respondents. It was no longer a unanimous 100% of the informants approving of errors, yet 93% of the subjects examined constituted those “trying not to criticize students for mistakes they produce”. To quote the evidence of this approach to language mistakes, it is essential to refer to subjects’ exact wording: “Everyone makes mistakes. We should not stress our students by correcting them”, “I do not correct my students’ mistakes because I do not want to discourage them from learning”.

Given the attitudes the informants held towards mistakes as such, the subjects in question were asked to report on the language mistakes both their students and they themselves had a tendency to commit most often when speaking and writing. It was essential that the subjects should list 3 examples at a time. In the case of the language problems frequently recurring in the oral performance, it was grammatical mistakes that turned out to be a real burden for the sample (Figure 4.14):

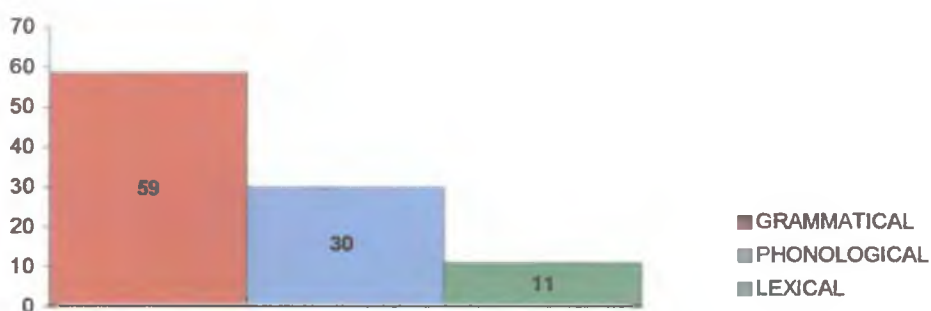


Fig. 4.14 Language mistakes committed by the subjects in speaking

As much as 59% of the subjects admitted having notorious problems with tenses, reported speech and articles. Second rated appeared phonological mistakes, with major difficulties ascribed to wrong intonation, stress and incorrect pronunciation. Last but not least, the informants remarked on their lexical problems, notably words mismatched or misplaced they uttered now and then.

As regards writing, about 40% of the informants stated they produced no mistakes in their written discourse, this being justified by ample amount of time given to complete the task of that sort:

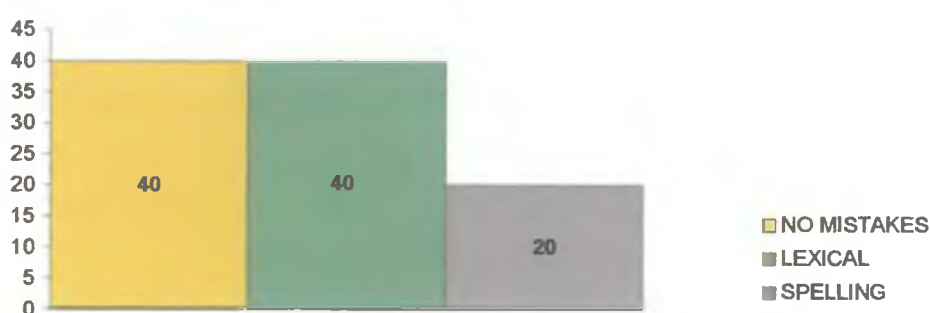


Fig. 4.15. Language mistakes committed by the subjects in writing

As clearly seen, another 40% of the subjects stressed the fact that lexis posed long-standing problems for them in writing. It covered the choice of wrong words, either mismatched or taken out of the context. 20% of the students, as the figures show, revealed their propensity for spelling mistakes. These comprised words with the letters in the incorrect order, or words missing some letters.

When asked about their students' mistakes most often made in speaking, 50% of the sampled subjects enumerated grammar mistakes, and, apparently, considered them most frequent in speaking.

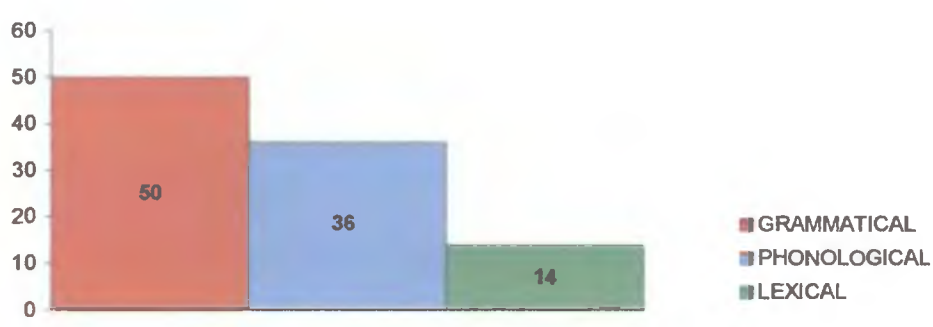


Fig. 4.16. Language mistakes committed by the subjects' students in speaking

More specifically, wrong word order, wrong tense and wrong inflections caused considerable hardships for the subjects' students. 36% of the sample quoted their students' phonological mistakes, wrong pronunciation, and Polish accent being most troublesome. Lexical problems were raised only by 14% of the subjects, on account of unsophisticated vocabulary their students used. However convincing this explanation may seem, it must be born in mind that the level of sophistication does not necessarily overlap with the level of item difficulty, and the other way round.

As was the case with speaking, grammar occurred to be complex and, hence, troublesome for the students involved in writing activities. 80% of the subjects had a strong claim that their students committed grammar mistakes on a number of occasions. These constituted word order inadequacies, and a multitude of wrong tense cases. 11% of the respondents, as can be seen below (Figure 4.17), raised the issue of their students' spelling mistakes, punctuation problems in particular.

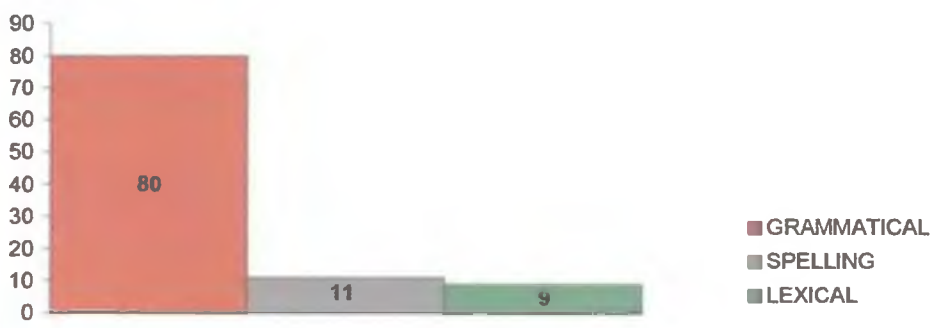


Fig. 4.17. Language mistakes committed by the subjects' students in writing

The remaining 9% of the sample, however, pointed out lexical difficulties their students encountered most frequently. They contained non-existent idiomatic phrases and collocations which, due to a 30-minute time-period allotted to the writing task, were, more often than not, the outcome of students' overproduction. As seen from the above discussion, language problems are inevitable. This inevitability is repeatedly emphasised by the subjects who are very much tolerant of language errors they and their students make. Oral mistakes the subjects themselves tend to commit in English cover grammar, phonology and lexis. Except for about 40% of the informants who do not face any language problems in their written performance, lexis and spelling are among the most frequently-quoted source of mistakes in writing. When it comes to the subjects' students, on the other hand, it is again grammar, phonology and lexis which cause most of the problems when speaking. The written mistakes do not differ much from the oral ones. Grammar mistakes are the most "popular", placing spelling and vocabulary further on the frequency scale.

6. Language habits

Having arrived at mistakes and language problems recurring in oral and written language production, the subjects' language habits constituted a basis for further discussion. Particularly, the respondents were examined on their conscious knowledge of language habits, and asked to instantiate these with 2 or 3 examples. The results showed, which should come as no surprise, lack of students' awareness of any language habits entrenched in their minds. True though it may seem, the suggestion is that a reverse situation could be the subject of discussion, providing the subjects' language behaviour was recorded or noted down by the observer.

7. Exposure to input

Bearing in mind the fact that language habits could be quickly generated owing to a limited exposure to the TL and TLC, or lack of it, the subsequent series of questions covered the amount of contact with English outside work and school environment, and, consequently, ways of subjects' individual work on the language. As it turned out, the outside-work-and-school contact with English the subjects admitted to consisted in:

- watching TV,
- visiting English-speaking friends,

- surfing the Internet,
- working abroad, and
- participating in workshops for teachers.

In percentage terms (see Figure 4.18), the subjects' exposure to input ranged from 50% of those using TV and Internet as the main source of the authentic language, and 25% of the sample staying in regular contact with their English-speaking friends, to 20% of workshop attendance and, a 5% minority occasionally working abroad.

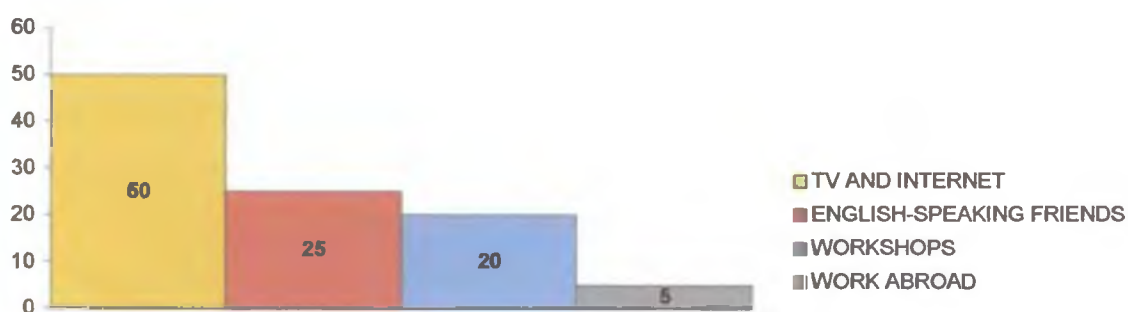


Fig. 4.18. Exposure to input (outside work and school environment)

The choice of the above-stated ways of being in touch with the TL and TLC was by no means accidental. Judging by the form of the contact with English, and its intensity, it is legitimate to say that it was the bounds of possibility and availability that determined students' options in many cases.

The same seemed to be true of the individual work on the language the subjects claimed to undertake on a regular basis. The criteria dictating their selection of improvement and English-promoting activities reflected accessibility and, equally important, price of the language authentic materials. The frequency of the use of the materials was represented by the following figures:

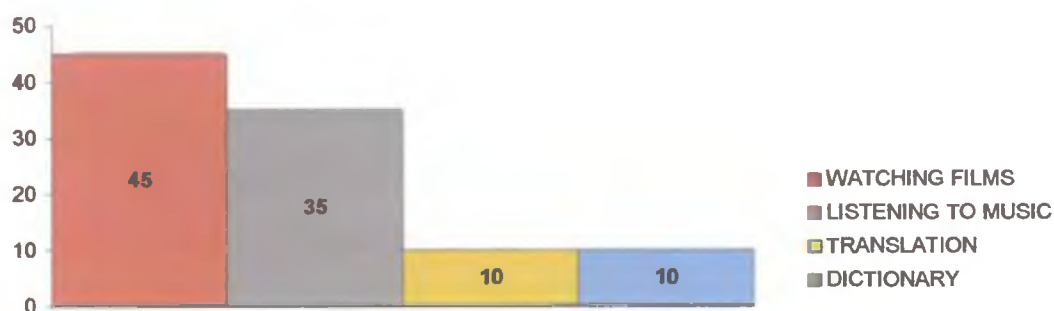


Fig. 4.19. Ways of individual work on the language

On the basis of these results, there seems to be no question that watching films and listening to music are among the most popular and commonest sources of the authentic language used by the respondents. A relatively lower score (a one-fifth minority) was given to translating texts, using dictionaries and reading press, relegating them into the category of minimum use.

Given a variety of means the subjects use in order to be in touch with English, it is clear that the matter of language quality is neither trivial nor unimportant to them. Their exposure to input takes on different forms, from the easily-accessible authentic materials like, for instance, films, music and Internet, to face-to-face contacts with the TLC, most significantly in the form of visiting friends or working in the English-speaking countries. If only they had more time, their language competence would receive even better treatment, preventing the language from ill and/or fossilized forms.

8. Fossilization

In approaching the problem of fossilization itself, which constituted the core issue of the questionnaire, the subjects were provided with four open-ended statements. The aim of this section was to test subjects' knowledge on fossilization and fossilization-related issues.

8.1. Definition of fossilization

The first one touched upon a definition of the very phenomenon. In their attempts to explain and define fossilization, 17% of the informants were unsuccessful, either leaving a blank space, or admitting lack of knowledge in the field. A great deal of the respondents, however, amounting to 83%, offered a wide range of explanations. To quote the evidence from the study, all the definitions were

collected below, re-arranged from most general to most specific ones, and tabled in the following way:

FOSSILIZATION IS / EQUALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of progress, - the process of not developing linguistically, - the process of not developing your language competence any more, - a language rule that is not mastered, - a wrong habit, - having bad language habits, - using language incorrectly - the incorrect mastering of certain linguistic aspects, - making errors that weren't made in the past, - a mistake that you still make because you've learnt something in a wrong way, - making the same mistake all the time, - a decrease or stoppage of language skills, - learning words with wrong pronunciation, - bad pronunciation.

Table 4.2. Subjects' definition of fossilization

All things considered, the entries provided by the subjects oscillated around a multifaceted nature of fossilization. They ranged from a general reference to language inappropriacy followed by a more detailed description of faulty and, at times, habitual language to language stoppage in many respects and language domains. Most of the explanations listed constituted much-quoted definitions and classic examples of the symptoms of fossilization to be found in the specialist literature. Notwithstanding a few less accurate interpretations of the phenomenon in question, the majority of the sample showed a good knowledge of the subject.

8.2. Symptoms of fossilization

The second fossilization-related issue concerned symptoms of fossilization. Accordingly, the subjects under investigation were expected to identify signals of fossilization to the best of their knowledge. The data gathered at this point revealed that a large proportion of the subjects showed complete ignorance of any symptoms indicative of fossilization. This 70% of the population neither specified nor gave a single example of the potential syndromes of fossilized competence. The remaining 30% of the sample, however, managed to generate a list of typical manifestations of fossilization. Again, for the sake of clarity of data presentation, the information was

presented in the general – to – specific order, and encapsulated into a tabular arrangement such as:

SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION INVOLVE:	
-	lack of knowledge,
-	omissions,
-	forgetting,
-	making the same mistakes all the time,
-	forgetting words or grammar aspects that we used to know,
-	wrong usage of words,
-	wrong collocations,
-	wrong spelling,
-	incorrect pronunciation.

Table 4.3 Symptoms of fossilization

Judging by the content of the above-listed inventory, it is evident that the subjects (at least in theory) were aware of the language incompleteness and language gaps indicative of fossilization. Incomplete as their responses might seem, they cannot be ignored or disregarded by any means, since it is the awareness of the problem itself that is considered to be the key to success in approaching it.

When asked about the very symptoms of fossilization the subjects noticed in themselves, almost a two-thirds majority hardly noticed any symptoms in their language competence that would be indicative of fossilization. Moreover, “none of the native-speakers they knew ever criticized or disapproved of their command of English”. Those who appeared to be fossilization-aware reported on lots of mistakes they committed due to faulty teaching in their primary schools. Besides, they “complained about” the use of inappropriate language in speaking. By this they meant both their formal and informal language style problems, as well as formation of words and phrases non-existent in the English language.

8.3. Causes of fossilization

Factors conducive to fossilization the subjects dealt with subsequently brought about anticipated outcomes. Although produced by a surprisingly small

number of students (19%), the answers they arrived at contained information of the potential causes of fossilization. They comprised:

- lack of practice,
- laziness,
- inhibitions,
- lack of time,
- lack of communication in English,
- little contact with the TL, and
- exposure to faulty language.

The causes introduced by the sample were mainly environmental in character. This can be dictated by personal experiences connected with the very classroom situation and artificial learning the subjects have access to. These, in turn, may, more often than not, involve bad teaching such as, for example, lack of model language provided by the teacher, and/or lack of teaching methods promoting natural communication. Psychological factors hinted at above, on the other hand, seem to be more “student-oriented”, and are likely to stem from personal traits they tend to exhibit in learning. Convincing as the responses received from a 19% minority of the sample may seem, there is no other rational explanation for skipping the issue of causal factors by a vast majority of the group examined but lack of knowledge.

8.4. Ways of preventing fossilization

Similarly, the question on the ways of preventing fossilization was unanswered by the majority of the respondents. This time, about 81% of the sample did not put forward any suggestions as to what measures could be taken to avoid fossilization. The remaining 19% of the subjects proposed a number of feasible solutions, enumerating, among other things:

- individual practice at the language,
- challenge setting when learning,
- error correction,
- double-check on the language areas considered difficult or troublesome,
- conversations with foreigners, and
- exposure to the TLC.

This set of “golden rules” established by the sample in order to avoid fossilization is definitely based on a combination of psychological and environmental factors. The former ones are highly dependent on the pace of learning, systematicity, motivation

and learning strategies employed by an individual student. The latter, on the other hand, are largely dictated by the amount and frequency of the language contact.

8.4.1. Student preventive measures

Regarding the de-fossilizing measures taken by the subjects, two-thirds of the sample did not specify any of the preventive actions. A one-third minority, on the other hand, had a strong claim that the mere fact of studying at the university was a sufficient proof of their efforts to “fight fossilization”.

The same proportions could be observed with respect to the subsequent question, namely measures taken to prevent fossilization from the position of a FL learner. Again, a two-thirds majority provided no information at all. Those in minority, however, exactly described their golden means, referred to as:

STUDENT ACTIONS PREVENTING FOSSILIZATION INVOLVE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- studying,- revising material,- double-check on things they are uncertain about,- extending vocabulary,- checking pronunciation, and- checking spelling.

Table 4.4. Measures taken to prevent fossilization from the position of a FL learner

Apart from studying, which is very general in character and covers a load of actions, the subjects underlined the need to consult dictionaries on a daily basis, not only when at a loss. What was being strongly emphasized was the use of teacher’s books and handbooks in case of grammar, meaning, pronunciation and spelling problems.

8.4.2. Teacher preventive measures

The subjects’ arguments in the face of the measures undertaken to prevent fossilization from the perspective of a FL teacher were pretty much the same. A large number of the informants (over 70% of them) stated they “regrettably had no time to bother”, and were totally unsuggestive. Almost 30% of the population, however, listed their ideas about how to avoid fossilization, and/or prevent it from happening and affecting their students. They are as follows:

TEACHER ACTIONS PREVENTING FOSSILIZATION INVOLVE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- revising material with students,- being well-prepared for the classes,- encouraging students to use dictionaries,- a lot of language practice, and- modelling the language by reading aloud and asking students to repeat after the teacher.

Table 4.5. Measures taken to prevent fossilization from the perspective of a FL teacher

As seen from the table, the suggestions proposed by the subjects constituted tiny words of advice easy to put into practice. There is thus no excuse for those teachers who justified their passivity and lack of involvement with lack of time.

8.5. Fear of fossilization

In the light of subjects’ arguments offering a variety of de-fossilizing actions, it was essential to the study to examine the sample for their fear of fossilization, on the assumption that the level of the fear of fossilization instilled in the subjects could influence their choice and range of preventive measures presented above. The question the subjects were confronted with aimed at identifying the fear of fossilization, and explaining the reasons for the status quo.

As illustrated below, as little as 5% of the group examined admitted having no fears of fossilization, however, did not justify their stance. By contrast, a vast majority of the subjects (95% of them) voiced real fears the thought of fossilization instilled in them.

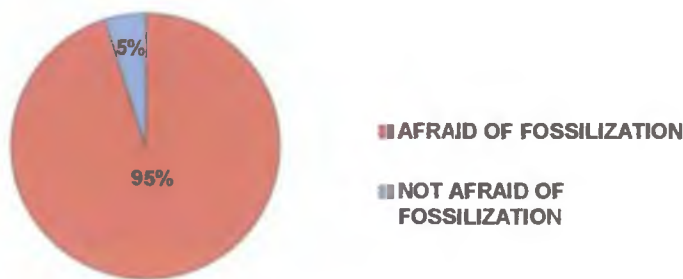


Fig. 4.20. Fear of fossilization

To quote the evidence from the study, the subjects’ fears of fossilization were fuelled by a number of factors. The most frequently-cited source of fear involved their position of authority in school, and lack of authority wrought by their fossilized competence. Such a situation, as the sample emphasized, “would be embarrassing because a language teacher should always be the model to follow”. “Otherwise, the students would have the same [fossilization] problem”. A further example of worries prompted by the phenomenon of fossilization was lack of time, and, consequently, lack of language practice. As these usually go in tandem, the subjects predicted with absolute certainty how severely they could be inflicted by the problem in question. Broadly speaking, about 83% of the respondents are able to define the phenomenon of fossilization in more or less general terms. However, when asked about symptoms of fossilization, only every fifth respondent arrives at the answer to the question. Consequently, only about 19% of the informants identify the above-mentioned in their interlanguage, and search for the potential causes of fossilization, most of which are environmental and psychological in nature. Similarly, the very same percentage of the subjects suggest fossilization preventive measures to be used by FL learners and FL teachers, the former based on individual material revision and extension, the latter being organised around extra revision and practice in the classroom. Surprisingly enough, almost all subjects seem to be afraid of fossilization. 95% of them admit living in fears of fossilization effects, such as, for example, limited language competence or lack of authority in the school.

9. Language achievement and language failure

Having discussed the phenomenon of fossilization and fossilization-related issues, the closing part of the questionnaire was centred upon the instances of subjects’ language achievement and failure. The aim of this last section was to inquire about language strengths and weaknesses the group exhibited, as well as successful and unsuccessful undertakings in learning and teaching the respondents experienced.

To begin with, the subjects were required to complete the statement worded as:
In English I am particularly good at.....
The results obtained brought evidence of subjects’ particular excellence in English grammar:

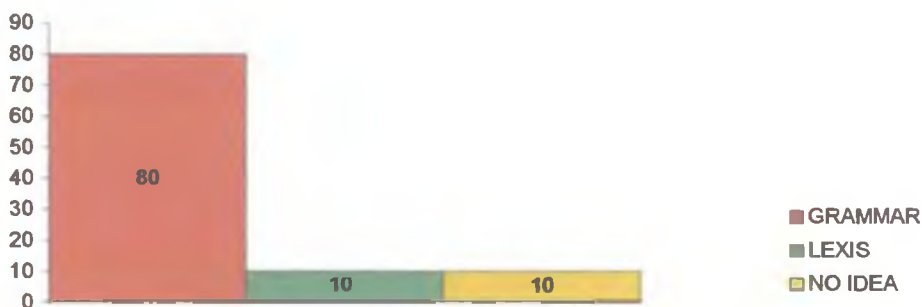


Fig. 4.21. Subjects' strong points in the language

Judging by the figures, it could be hypothetised that the subjects' good knowledge of grammar stemmed from the fact that grammar was given too much focus in the past, diminishing, at the same time, the role of other language aspects. The remaining 20% was equally divided between those who considered vocabulary as their good point, and those subjects who could not think of any language areas they were particularly good at.

The subsequent sentence the respondents were provided with reflected the opposite situation:

In English I am particularly bad at.....

At this point, writing took a lead being chosen by about 40% of the sample. As can readily be seen (Figure 4.22), the group examined turned out to be slightly less skilled in speaking, and exposed shortcomings 30% of the population suffered from with respect to vocabulary.



Fig. 4.22. Subjects' weak points in the language

Given the subjects’ strengths and weaknesses, the information on the language areas the sample maintained and lost confidence in followed. The former brought about the following outcomes:

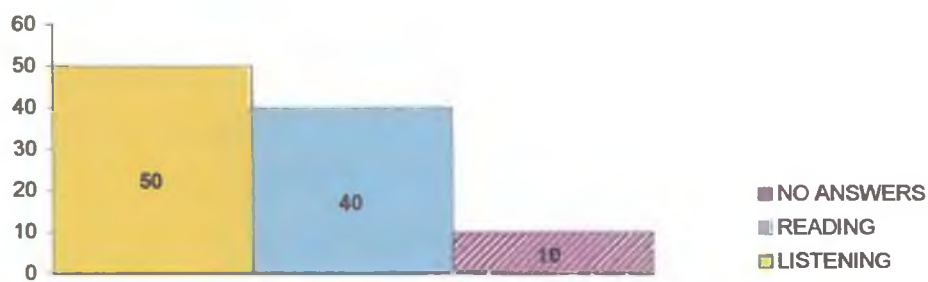


Fig. 4.23. Subjects’ confidence in the language

According to the figures, apart from a 10% minority who left the question unanswered and unaccounted for, the respondents appeared confident about listening in the first place, and reading in the second. This could be accounted for great simplicity ascribed to both listening and reading underlined in the previous sections of the questionnaire.

The point to be stressed here is that the same criterion, notably the easiness of the language item, seemed to be of great relevance for the subjects when searching for the language areas they lacked confidence in. Simply, the data gathered this time overlapped with the outcomes presented on the occasion of language aspects and their estimated difficulty.

As it was previously the case, speaking was given a 60% dose of uncertainty, and was classified as the language skill the majority of the informants were by no means confident about.

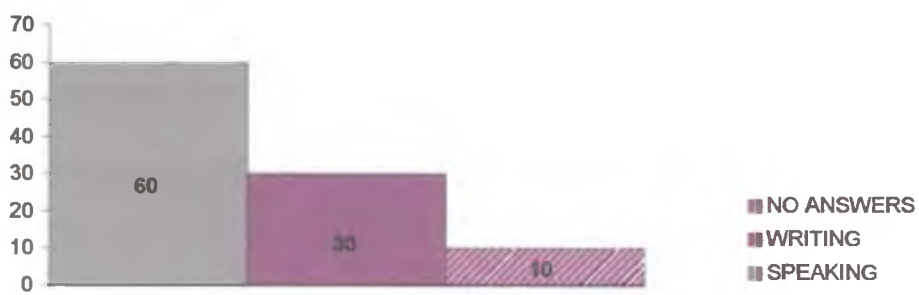


Fig. 4.24. Subjects’ lack of confidence in the language

Writing was chosen by about 30% of the sample, while the remaining 10% of the subjects did not provide any example, saying they “do not know at present and would have to give it a thought later on”.

Having dealt with this series of questions, the subjects proceeded to complete the statements reflecting their remarkable learning and teaching achievements. To start with, an illustration of considerable language attainment from the perspective of subjects as FL learners follows:

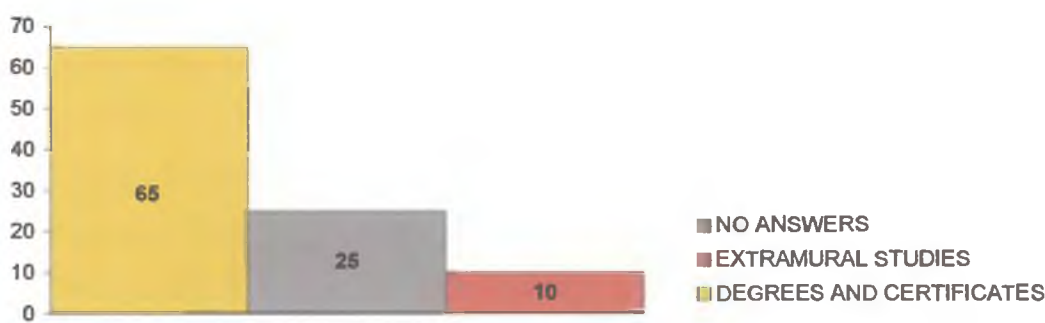


Fig. 4.25. Subjects’ success in learning the language

Basing on the figures presented above, it was immediately apparent that a large proportion of the sample considered degrees and certificates as determinants of their success. Out of 65% of the respondents in question, 60% claimed to be proud of their BA degree in the English language, and 5% of the sample being boastful about the CPE certificate. Another 10% of the questioned subjects expressed their immense satisfaction with their extramural studies at the university, and regrettably, one-quarters of the informants left the question unanswered, stressing the fact that they were “still waiting for their success in this area”.

Conversely, the subjects’ success in relation to teaching English was one-sided, and involved their personal satisfaction with the very fact of having a job. This, unquestionably, reflects the Polish reality in which keeping a job gives grounds for satisfaction. As illustrated below, as much as 90% of the subjects under investigation were proud of working, irrespective of their actual place of work:



Fig. 4.26. Subjects' success in teaching the language

The remaining 10% constituted those who took pride in being a New Matura Examiner, or were satisfied with their students' command of English.

Further on, when the subject of language failure was raised, the subjects' task was to reflect on their process of learning and teaching, and note down the occasions and/or circumstances under which they did not fare successfully. Essentially, what was being emphasized by about 45% of the respondents with respect to their lack of success in learning English involved low grades (Figure 4.27):



Fig. 4.27. Subjects' failure in learning the language

As seen from the above, 15% of the sample admitted having a long history of academic failure in the form of the exams they failed. 40% of the subjects, on the other hand, stated they "had never experienced a sense of failure at the academic level".

This sense of failure seemed to be unknown for 55% of the subjects looking back over their teaching experiences. 3 persons simply had nothing to do with teaching English on a regular basis. The remaining 52%, however, highlighted the fact of being fulfilled and successful teachers. Those who did experience failure in

teaching, as presented below, had discipline problems with their students.

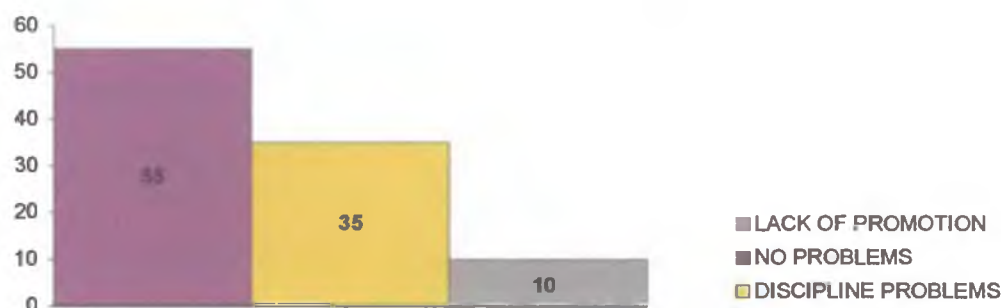


Fig. 4.28. Subjects' failure in teaching the language

10% of the respondents reported on the lack of promotion and promotion-related difficulties they encountered in their teaching career. These, basically, constituted the source of frustration and bitter disappointment among the group examined. All in all, the section has been intertwined with subjects' feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. As regards the former ones, the informants are very positive about their grammatical competence and consider it their strong point. They are very confident about their listening and reading skills, and proud of their BA degrees in English, and the very fact of having a job. When it comes to the source of subjects' dissatisfaction, vocabulary, speaking and writing constitute the language areas the sampled students are neither positive nor confident about. What is more, over one half of the informants display negative opinions about the grades they receive. And, finally, almost 50% of the respondents cannot help discipline problems they encounter at work, and feel the deep disappointment at not being promoted.

10. Summary of findings

Summing up the subjects' learning and teaching experiences, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The subjects are positive about their past and present experiences, their command of English and linguistic competence included.
- This "language satisfaction" is reflected in a positive way the respondents assess the English language, its language subsystems and language skills among other things.
- The easiest language subsystems are represented by pronunciation and grammar, whereas the least demanding and uncomplicated language skills are

listening and reading. In addition to it, the subjects perceive BICS to be by no means problematic for them.

- The most favourable language activities involve grammar tasks in the first place, vocabulary activities in the second, and reading given the third place.
- The attitude the subjects display towards mistakes can be worded as positive, both from the perspective of a FL learner and FL teacher. In both cases, the informants unanimously emphasise error inevitability in the learning-teaching process and, consequently, advocate the approach disapproving of teacher interference and teacher criticism in the face of language mistakes.
- Gentle correction and minimum teacher “intervention” though the subjects propagate, they are keenly aware of the mistakes their students make. It is mainly grammar, phonology and lexis that their students log behind in speaking. The situation looks all the same in writing except that pronunciation difficulties are replaced with punctuation problems.
- Similarly, the most frequently-committed mistakes reported on by the subjects themselves cover grammar and lexis in speaking, and lexis together with spelling in writing.
- The immediate explanation for this state of affairs is the exposure to input, and the amount of the contact with English the sampled students experience outside school and work. Basically, it involves watching TV, and surfing the Internet most often, while, for obvious reasons, visiting English-speaking friends, and working abroad belong to less-frequent ways of being in touch with the TLC.
- Essentially, the afore-mentioned exposure to input determines not only the sort and frequency of language mistakes, but it has proved to have far-reaching consequences under the label of fossilization.
- The subjects, when confronted with the phenomenon of fossilization itself, have awareness of the problem, and offer a plethora of its interpretations, placing special emphasis on, as they put it, the “stoppage” of the learning process, and language incorrectness.
- In the case of the symptoms of fossilization, the subjects, accordingly, enumerate lack of knowledge and faulty language. As many as two-thirds claim to have never observed any of the indicators of fossilization in their language performance.

- The causal factors most of the respondents remark on include psychological and environmental aspects, focus being shifted on personality traits and the classroom setting.
- Irrespective of the impact the above-mentioned exert on the phenomenon in question, 95% of the respondents fear fossilization, and do their utmost to prevent it from happening both from the position of FL learners and FL teachers.
- The most popular student preventive actions comprise revision and practice activities the subjects do with the use of self-study edition coursebooks.
- The most widely-used teacher preventive measures, accordingly, consist of being well-prepared for the lesson, providing students with a stock of revision and practice-oriented exercises, and encouraging students to use dictionaries a lot on their own.
- In their attempts to master the language to a remarkable degree, the subjects are aware of their strengths and weaknesses responsible for their success and/or failure in their learning and teaching career. They admit being good at grammar and lexis, and slightly less skillful in writing and speaking.
- Their “confidence in language” is on the whole confined to listening and reading, whereas their lack of confidence is, unsurprisingly, strongly emphasised in the case of writing and speaking.
- Traces of success in learning the language have been detected with respect to degrees and certificates the subjects hold, and the very fact of being a university student. Signs of failure the respondents report on, on the other hand, include low grades they receive as extramural students.
- Finally, success in teaching is, generally speaking, understood as having a job as such. In few cases, however, the subjects’ perception of success goes beyond their satisfaction from being employed, and takes on the form of their satisfaction derived from being a New Matura examiner.
- The fact that the subjects look back on their teaching career with great satisfaction cannot be denied as long as 55% of the informants admit having no experience of failure. Those who do express their disappointment underline discipline problems they encounter in the classroom environment and leave unresolved, or elsewhere, complain about lack of promotion and immediate prospects for getting promoted.

CHAPTER V

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF ORAL AND WRITTEN PERFORMANCE: FOSSILIZATION DEVELOPMENT

1. Scheme of data analysis

This chapter constitutes a detailed analysis of oral and written performance the advanced learners and users of English produced on three different occasions, i.e. measurements of their spoken and written language competence. The hereby obtained results are looked at from the perspective of the indicators of fossilization distinguished for the purposes of the study (Chapter III), and are interpreted from two different angles, notably that of the text or discourse type, and the measurement alone.

The former one is supposed to allow for a division of the data collected into oral and written responses exclusively, and, consequently, a close examination of the subjects' overall oral production followed by their entire written performance.

PROCEDURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral performance – measurement 1 • Oral performance – measurement 2 • Oral performance – measurement 3 • Written performance – measurement 1 • Written performance – measurement 2 • Written performance – measurement 3

Table 5.1. Scheme of data analysis (text type criterion)

In either case, the focus is to be put on the quality of the language material as such. This involves the analysis of the quality of the performance, paying special attention to a comparison of language behaviours and language patterns produced by the sample within a specific discourse type, and the so called “intra-textual” changes in terms of the quality of oral and written performance over the three measurement periods.

The measurement-based criterion, on the other hand, is expected to contribute to the analysis of oral and written text samples produced at the time of the first, second and third measurement. It is believed to give a close insight into the language production, placing an emphasis on the so called “inter-discourse” or “inter-textual” changes observed over time. This is going to be achieved on the basis of the subjects’ performance alongside the three measurements, each organized around “inter-textual” comparisons contrasting oral text samples with the written ones accordingly.

PROCEDURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and written performance – measurement 1 • Oral and written performance – measurement 2 • Oral and written performance – measurement 3

Table 5.2. Scheme of data analysis (the measurement criterion)

The comparison in question consists in similarities and differences with respect to the language produced at a given time, prominence being given to the scope and extent of the language forms indicative of fossilization.

Irrespective of the approach undertaken to the database collected, the analysis is conducted quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantity refers to the number of particular categories of fossilization syndromes, and the frequency of appearance each of them scores in subjects’ oral and written discourses at each measurement. A qualitative data interpretation, on the other hand, reckons on a range of quality features related to the type and scope of language behaviours symptomatic of fossilization. Based on the original forms of language examples and comments made by the sample, the analysis in focus starts from a diagnosis of the symptoms of fossilization detected in the subjects’ interlanguage. Further on, it investigates the nature of the language change over the three time-periods, an emphasis being put on fossilization development. In order to show its direction, the three measurements are contrasted with one another in the following way:

PROCEDURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral and written performance – measurement 1 &2 • Oral and written performance – measurement 2 &3 • Oral and written performance – measurement 1& 3 • Oral and written performance – measurement 1, 2 & 3

Table 5.3. Scheme of data analysis (fossilization development)

Given both increasing and/or decreasing fossilization tendencies, the analysis in question is expected to culminate in a typology of the stages of fossilization (Chapter VI).

2. Oral performance – measurement 1

The analysis of oral text samples presented below shows the so called “oral symptoms” of fossilization distinguished at the time of the first measurement. The analysis in question is two-fold, that is it relies on the two criteria selected to investigate the subjects’ oral performance for language accuracy and language fluency. To be more exact, the measurement criteria used in the study are organized around several language aspects each. The list of the measures taken into account in the case of the oral performance goes as follows:

Criterion	Frequency of occurrence
● the criterion of accuracy:	
- grammar	
- lexis	
- morphology	
- phonology	
● the criterion of fluency	
- final and filled pauses	
- fillers	
- repetitions	
- false starts (reformulations)	
- unfinished words/phrases	
- overreliance on certain structures	
- overuse of discourse markers	
- redundant categories	
- meaningless expressions	

Table 5.4. The measurement criteria for oral text samples

A number of occurrences, and degree of persistence of both erroneous and non-erroneous language forms identified with the use of the above-enumerated “devices” are expected to be indicative and evaluative of the stages of fossilization among the advanced language learners and users.

2.1. The criterion of accuracy

The criterion of accuracy has been chosen to examine the extent of language exactness and correctness of the spoken discourses produced by the sample. More

precisely, the subjects' responses are looked at from the perspective of grammar, lexis, morphology and phonology. Grammar encompasses all the linguistic units, from single words to full sentences, the way they are combined, positioned as well as realized in the overall language system. Lexis, to be more specific, covers lexemes, including rules of their combinability and restrictions on their usage. Morphology, as the name suggests, constitutes morphemes, their different forms, as well as the very rules of word formation. Phonology, on the other hand, apart from being composed of the rules regulating relationships between segmentals and suprasegmentals, deals with the way the sounds are produced.

2.1.1. Grammar

The grammatical inaccuracies the subjects produced at the time of the first measurement gave rise to 24 categories of the so called "grammatical symptoms of fossilization". Ordered from the most to the least frequently occurring, the subjects' behaviours symptomatic of fossilization constituted what follows:

- 1) OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 2) LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT
- 3) WRONG WORD ORDER
- 4) WRONG STRUCTURES
- 5) WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 6) WRONG VERB FORMS
- 7) SUBJECT OMISSION
- 8) WRONG PREPOSITIONS
- 9) PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL/SINGULAR FORMS
- 10) WRONG CONJUNCTIONS
- 11) WRONG PRONOUNS
- 12) VERB OMISSION
- 13) LACK OF NOUN-PRONOUN AGREEMENT
- 14) PROBLEMS WITH OTHER/THE OTHER
- 15) MISUSE OF ARTICLES
- 16) DOUBLE VERBS
- 17) OMISSION OF CONJUNCTIONS
- 18) DOUBLE NEGATION
- 19) MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
- 20) PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS

21) OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS

22) OVERUSE OF PRONOUNS

23) MISUSE OF QUANTIFIERS

24) WRONG TENSE

As can readily be seen, the first place in the overall classification of grammatical inaccuracies was ascribed to the omission of articles. The very category covered 18 cases altogether, 10 of which were devoid of an indefinite article whereas 8 lacked a definite one (see Appendix 5). Following the results, the situations in which an indefinite article was left out constituted what follows:

- **We made terrible mistake.*
- **This is kind of... or*
- **...up to certain point.*

Clear as these sentences were, they lacked precision being reference to any of a kind, an object or situation not stated or not known.

The cases lacking a definite article, on the other hand, were illustrated in the sentences below:

- **She received Nobel Prize.*
- **And last thing I want to say... or*
- **They are interested in common.*

Again, the language produced by the sample was comprehensible, but its forms violated the rule of placing definite articles before proper nouns, expressions such as next and last when they do not refer to proximate days, weeks, etc., and before adjectives changed into abstract nouns respectively.

The second most frequently occurring symptoms of fossilization consisted in the lack of subject-verb concord. It brought about 13 situations in which the sentence subject did not match the form of the verb (see Appendix 5). More precisely, the 3rd person singular verb inflections or verb forms were used by the respondents where irrelevant, or omitted where necessary. The former case was manifested in 9 sentences, such as, for example:

- **...to think what other people looks.*
- **Most of inventions is connected with... or*
- **There are some cases when people prefers.*

Judging by the examples presented above, the deviations from TL norms had their source in the subjects' use of singular verb forms which did not correspond to the noun phrase being the sentence subject.

The latter, on the other hand, appeared on 4 occasions, and, among other things, resulted in the following instances of the subject-verb disagreement:

- **There 's another proverb I think which confirm that... or*
- **It's wrong when somebody compare us to somebody else.*

Here, the source of inaccuracies is attributed to the omission of 3rd person singular inflection crucial to the proper structuring of the sentences listed above.

What followed were 9 occurrences of the wrong word order (see Appendix 5). These, as the name indicates, covered the situations in which the sentence constituents were wrongly ordered and/or misplaced. Especially difficult seemed proverbs and adjectives, due to their fixed word order and positions they are put in in a sentence. To quote the evidence from the study, the subjects mispositioned adverbs and adjectives, mistakenly placing them at the end of a sentence, as well as misplaced the sentence subjects and/or objects, wrongly moving them to the final position. The “adverbial” problems the sample faced were, for example, evident in the following utterances:

- **We should make hay when the sun shines always or*
- **One must be really brave to tell the truth always.*

The first sentence does not require an adverb at all, whereas the other follows the pattern relying on the adverb placed in the mid-sentence position.

The instances of the subject/object misposition, on the other hand, involved, for example:

- **It's generalization this statement or*
- **This is really for them shock.*

In either case, the sentence subject was given the final position. The TL rules, however, require shifting the former to the initial position, and placing the latter in the middle.

Lower in the classification were the two 8-occurrence categories, namely wrong structures and wrong verb patterns. The term “wrong structures” was used to cover the incorrect sentence patterns, be it affirmative, negative or interrogative utterances. The inappropriate affirmative patterns involved, among other things, the use of *that-clause* where the verb was required, or *there is* structure instead of *it is*

form. Accordingly, the wrong negative and interrogative structure could be observed in the case of the so called “negative question”, where the subjects did not conform to the rules specifying the patterns following the negative elements. For example:

- **Think about that they are here.*
- **There's hard sometimes to explain some kind of generation gap between people or*
- **If you can lie well, why not to try?*

While the second sentence reflects the subjects' difficulties with *there is/there are* structure and its usage, the first and the third utterances are the effects of the subjects' L1, each evident in the negative transfer.

Analogously to the above-mentioned, the category of wrong verb patterns consisted in the use of the verbs which followed the inappropriate patterns. This time, the inaccuracies the sample texts contained were found among the affirmative utterances exclusively, and among other things, were manifested in the use of *- ing* forms where *to-infinitives* were the TL norm, *to-infinitive* forms instead of *bare infinitives*, or *verb object* patterns lacking either of their constituents. To enumerate some of them, the following examples are quoted:

- **...stopped trying to ehmmm living at all.*
- **...situation will ermm make you to lie again or*
- **They feel.*

As is clearly seen, the first two examples show the subjects' problems when making choices between *to* and *bare infinitives*. The third utterance, on the other hand, seems to result from the subjects' use of a transitive verb in an intransitive manner.

The subjects' problems with verbs were also reflected in the subsequent category referred to as the wrong verb forms. It scored as many as 6 occurrences, and was manifested in the subjects' use of *past participle* forms where the past tense forms were required, or the use of the *past simple* verb form instead of the infinitive one, to name a few (see Appendix 5). For example:

- **Jesus Christ, I forgotten the word.*
- **I didn't wanted to harm you, or*
- **When the western world try tried to help poor people ermm it worsen the the situation.*

The incorrect use of the past participle form is manifested in the first of the sentences listed at above. The two remaining examples, on the other hand, violate the rules of

the past simple constructions, encapsulated in the wrong negation and affirmative verb pattern respectively.

Identical in the frequency of appearance was the category of subject omission. Following the results from the study, the sample omitted the sentence subject on 6 different occasions, producing incomplete, and, more often than not, ambiguous sentences (see Appendix 5). The resultant constructions are illustrated below:

- **Too much of anything and flies to the head* or
- **When a man makes a woman his wife is in fact the highest compliment.*

Judging by the examples given, each of the sentences lacks the pronoun *it*, at the same time being devoid of the relationship between *it* and its antecedents, and hindering comprehension of the strings of the language produced.

The subsequent category, i.e. the wrong preposition category scored 4 occurrences in total. Each of them revealed the subjects' wrong choice of preposition, *from* instead of *of*, *for* instead of *of*, *to* mistakenly replaced with *for*, or *in* wrongly substituted with *with*, resulting in the following inaccuracies:

- **...the example is Mother Teresa from Calcuta.*
- **...are more tolerant for changes.*
- **So in this I agree* or
- **So to a man it's advisable...*

Three of the four sentences produced by the respondents are without a doubt the result of L1 influence, rendered by prepositions equivalent to those used in Polish.

Slightly less common appeared problems with plural/singular forms, wrong conjunctions, wrong pronouns, as well as verb omission which constituted a 3-occurrence category each. The subjects' problems with the number were reduced to incorrect forms of plurality. These involved the regular "s" endings attached to those nouns forming plural forms by means of the vowel change, the "s" suffix added to an uncountable noun, or the regular plural "s" used with possessive pronouns. For example:

- **There were and more mens,*
- **...gossips* or
- **They can change thiers mind.*

Although grammatically unacceptable, the forms created by the subjects neither changed the speakers' intended meaning nor brought about a high degree of ambiguity.

The three examples of wrong conjunctions consisted in the wrong use of the conjunction *and*. Basing on the results from the study, there was 1 case where it should have been substituted with *but*, and 2 cases where the *and* conjunction should not have been used at all. The exact inaccuracies deriving from the subjects' performance included:

- **...and ermm however it's something really difficult because if that choice is so big and so great we simply don't know what to do.*
- **...and however in modern times it is more and more difficult to help other without having money and influences in politics, industry, and so on, and*
- **They accept different different types of clothes, different types of music, and sometimes it was strange and not proper for some kind of behaviour.*

The use of *and* in the first sentence did not render the "opposition" the context was indicative of. The other sentences did not lead to such consequences, yet the linking word in question made them clumsy and difficult to comprehend.

The category of wrong pronouns showed the subjects' difficulties with demonstrative and reflexive pronouns. Particularly, the forms of the pronouns did not correspond with the nouns they preceded, as well as there was one single occurrence in which the wrong type of the pronoun was selected. To illustrate the afore-mentioned with examples, the following utterances are provided:

- **...this people this...*
- **...is not ehmm very good for for people for themselves.*

In the case of the former, the singular demonstrative pronoun was inappropriately used with the plural form of the noun. In the latter sequence, however, the reflexive pronoun should have been replaced with the personal one.

The category of verb omission, as the name indicates, mirrored three situations in which the subjects did not use the verb at all, producing "verbless utterances" so to speak. To this type referred the sentences lacking the copula *to be*:

- **...that's why their words no not worth too much, and*
- **I think the little minds equivalent of stupid people.*

Being disposed of the verb, the first sentence did not lose its meaning retained by the two negative elements, which was not the case with the second utterance which

could be interpreted in two ways (as *minds' equivalent*, or putatively as *minds are equivalent to stupid people*).

The next four categories, that is the lack of noun-pronoun agreement, problems with other/the other, the misuse of articles, and the double verb use were represented by two occurrences each.

As the name suggests, the category of the lack of noun-pronoun agreement covered the cases in which the noun was modified by a miscorresponding pronoun. Basing on the research findings, the possessive pronouns selected by the respondents did not match the number and gender of the noun they referred to, giving rise to the following inaccuracies:

- *Men choose the the one woman of his life, and
- *This is really for them shock and it's said that everyone in his life...

Grammatically incorrect as these sentences were, the subjects' wrong choice of pronouns did not have as far-reaching consequences as the previous case, and did not block the communication.

The subjects' problems with other/the other consisted in the use of the former where the latter was required. To be more specific, the sample had a tendency to opt for the *other* determiner, referring to more than one item or person without mentioning it in the cases which asked for precise information about what or who they were. For example:

- *...to seek contacts with other or
- *...to make any contacts with other.

As can readily be seen, either of these utterances was incomprehensible and left much to be desired.

The category of the misuse of articles consisted in the two situations in which the articles were wrongly used. Following the results from the study, an indefinite article instead of a definite one was used in the first case, and an indefinite article was inserted into a sentence which did not require it in the second:

- *...to show a world and
- *We don't have a friends.

The first case definitely violated the rule of using definite articles before nouns of which there is only one. The second sentence, on the other hand, did not conform to the principles of the so called zero indefinite article, one of which is the case of plural nouns.

The term “double verb” was coined to refer to the situations in which an utterance or a sentence was composed of two (consecutive) verbs. The subjects produced 2 sentences of this type, namely:

- **If it's really hurts... and*
- **We would like to be spend time with.*

In either case, the resultant constructions violated the TL norm of one main verb in a sentence, bringing about misunderstandings, especially in the second structure.

The following group of grammatical inaccuracies contains 8 one-occurrence categories. These range from omission-, misuse- and overuse-related categories to those made up of the problems the respondents encountered when speaking, and wrong choices they made.

To start with the omission category, it covered one sentence from which a conjunction was excluded:

- **If we have money, we can do much more than we don't have them.*

Irrelevant as the lack of conjunction may seem at first sight, a closer analysis of the sentence given above proves that it is the other way round. Being disposed of *if* or *when*, the utterance is not only intra-structurally incoherent, but it is, first and foremost, likely to put the interlocutor off the track.

As regards the misuse categories, one of them was related to a preposition, the other to a quantifier. The former consisted in the situation in which the wrong preposition was used:

- **We need the other people's attention, even only with the words.*

Judging by the preposition the sample inserted into the sequence presented above, it can be admitted with no reservations that it was L1 interference that gave rise to this sentence.

The latter case, referred to as the quantifier misuse, on the other hand, was wider in its consequences, making the whole construction erroneous:

- **There are no some ideals.*

The sentence the sample produced can be called a “mixture type”, i.e. consisting of the elements of both negative and affirmative utterance patterns, the constituents of which are never combined with each other according to the syntactic rules.

As far as the overuse-related categories are concerned, the overuse of preposition was evident in the utterance in which the preposition was irrelevant, yet still used by the subject:

- *...on 2000 years ago.

What it resulted in was certainly a fairly comprehensible unit, but did not follow the rules of forming time expressions in English, one of which excluded the use of prepositions.

The pronoun overuse, on the other hand, consisted in the use of the reflexive pronoun where it was inappropriate. For example:

- *We should ourselves choose.

This sentence seems to be an example of two deviations from TL norms. One is manifested in the use of the reflexive pronoun after the modal verb, the other reveals itself in the subject's reliance on the reflexive pronoun with respect to the verb *choose*, which does not belong to the group of reflexive verbs whatsoever.

Yet another type of overuse was observed. It referred to the use of the two negation elements in a sentence, the result of which being what follows:

- *She didn't have nothing.

The "double negation" can be accounted for nothing but L1 influence, and the subject's reliance on the negation patterns the Polish language operates on, one of which being the two negative elements within a sentence.

As far as the problem-oriented category is concerned, the sample faced a real difficulty with respect to the question formation. As a result of it, an indirect question intended by the speaker took on the form of a direct one:

- *I have no idea how will it be.

Although the resultant form of the question was far from TL standards and speaker's intentions, the original meaning was maintained.

In final, there was one single case of the wrong tense usage. More specifically, the *Present Continuous* tense instead of the *Present Perfect* was used, the evidence of which was noticed in the following sentence:

- *I think that we are working ehmmm for our reputation during all life.

What lies behind the subject's choice of the tense may be referred to as L1-L2 discrepancies in terms of tense systems, the former having no equivalent of the Present Perfect construction, it being a hardship for the Polish learners.

2.1.2. Lexis

The lexical inaccuracies observed among the sample gave rise to the wrong word category. It revealed the subjects' difficulties within different word classes (6 examples altogether), as well as those caused by one-word category (4 in total). The

former case, deriving from the so called “inter-class interferences”, consisted in the use of adjectives where adverbs were required, adjectives wrongly substituted with nouns, and articles used instead of pronouns, to name a few. The exact examples of the above-enumerated were found in the following sentences:

- *...are not necessary normal for people.
- *...make people strength or
- *...the problem is the not everyone likes...

The first two examples revealed the subjects’ difficulties with parts of speech and their usage. The third one, on the other hand, showed the problems the group in question had with articles which, at this particular point, were inappropriately placed before the negative element.

The latter case was, among other things, manifested in the use of the wrong verb, i.e. the verb being misleading for the listener, the inappropriate noun, i.e. the noun that did not fit the context, or the wrong conjunction, changing the intended meaning of the speaker, such as:

- are instead of have: **We are a lot of friends.*
- site instead of side: **The lack of emotional site.*
- that instead of but: *...*that it has hmmm it hasn't found the cure for the lack of hmmm compassion.*

All of these utterances are equally ambiguous. The first one shows the difference in meaning between one’s personal qualities and acquaintances, the second is built on a discrepancy between an aspect and a place, whereas the third one does not necessarily point to emphasis it was originally meant for by the speaker.

2.1.3. Morphology

The morphological analysis, i.e. examining the subjects’ performance for structure and form of words and phrases, did not reveal any problems on the part of the sample.

2.1.4. Pronunciation

On the contrary, the pronunciation problems the subjects encountered were two-fold. They involved difficulties with stress and vowel pronunciation captured under the same label (26 occurrences in toto).

As regards the stress-related problems, 4 words turned out to be a real hardship for the subjects in question. To quote the evidence from the study, there were 19 cases of that type, namely:

- *advertisement* with the last syllable stressed (9 occurrences),
- *advertise* stressed on the last syllable (4 cases in total),
- *advantageous* stressed on the second syllable (3 altogether), and
- *develop* with the stress placed on the last syllable (3 of them)

The deviations from norm could be accounted for inappropriate stress shifting, particularly in the case of the stress moving and stress carrying suffixes, as well as in-between word class stress placement.

The vowel-based difficulties, on the other hand, appeared on 15 occasions altogether, being reflected in the vowel(s) mispronounced. Many a time the original English vowel was substituted with the Polish one. For example:

- *advertisement* pronounced with the Polish “i” sound (9 occurrences),
- *obvious* pronounced with the Polish “u” vowel (6 of them),
- *sausage* realized by means of the “a” sound (1 single occurrence)

As the first two did not bring about considerable misunderstanding, the last example may have far more reaching consequences for it sounds extremely strange and misleading.

2.2. The criterion of fluency

The criterion of fluency (see Table 5.3) concentrates on the easiness of expression and continuity of speech. This time, the language produced is investigated from the perspective of inter and intra-discourse links, paying a special emphasis on the so called “disfluencies”. These, among other things, are caused by pauses, all-purpose words, repetitions, reformulations, unfinished utterances, overreliance on certain structures, overuse of discourse markers, redundant categories or meaningless expressions, and, depending on the language feature produced, can be either erroneous or non-erroneous. To begin with, pauses are features of speech in which gaps or hesitation sounds appear during the production of utterances. All-purpose words are the type of words used when at a communicative loss, and short of ideas of how to continue on in a sentence. Repetitions, as the name suggests, refer to both one-word utterances and strings of the language usually consisting of doubled, tripled or quadrupled words. Reformulations encompass any attempts to rephrase the language forms. Unfinished utterances, on the other hand, cover any verbal responses which, for some reason or other, are not completed. Overreliance on certain structures is related to the overuse and overproduction of a given fixed expression or grammatical construction. Discourse markers, accordingly, are linguistic features

which indicate how one sentence relates to another, and may lead to incomprehensive speech when overused. Redundant categories are conceived of as the utterances that are not needed, or the expressions that are far too many in a given sentence. Last but not least, the meaningless expressions cover the linguistic elements, or parts of sentence that simply do not make sense and are pointless.

A thorough investigation of the subjects' discourses revealed a number of inaccuracies being detrimental to the steady flow of speech. The whole body of evidence contributed to 7 categories of the so called "disfluency markers". Ordered from the most to the least frequently appearing, the indicators of disfluency made up the following list:

- 1) PAUSES
- 2) FIXED EXPRESSIONS
- 3) REPETITIONS
- 4) REFORMULATIONS
- 5) ALL PURPOSE WORDS
- 6) UNFINISHED SENTENCES
- 7) MEANINGLESS SENTENCES.

The first on the list, the category of pauses, was composed of 121 cases altogether (see Appendix 5). It covered 105 vocal and 16 silent pauses. To the former type belonged the subjects' verbal behaviours filling the gaps they produced before they actually started their performance or while speaking. The fillers they used in either case were hesitation sounds in 99 cases, and bellows of laughter the respondents gave on 6 occasions. To name a few examples of the so called "pre-speaking means" the sample resorted to in order to fill in the lengthening silence, the following utterances are provided:

- *Ermmm so...*
- *Ermm I think it's the ..., or*
- *Ehmmm I think ...*

Used in this way, the fillers definitely served their role, giving the sample ample time to plan what to say next, but the quality of the performance was reduced due to a slow pace.

The "while-speaking sounds" the respondents made use of, on the other hand, were encapsulated in the following:

- *Sometimes it's hard to ehmmmm...*

- *We remember her and hmmm...*
- *Ads want to show erm things ...*

The fillers the subjects used in a mid-sentence position or at the end of it, not only slowed down their responses, but also made them fragmented and disconnected.

The 6 remaining situations, as has already been mentioned, consisted in ripples of laughter recorded on the part of the questioned subjects. As the research demonstrated, the respondents laughed at the beginning, in the middle and at the very end of their performance, opening, interrupting or closing the comments they made with laughter accordingly:

- *(laughter) Can I finish later? or*
- *.Jesus Christ (laughter) I forgotten the word (laughter).*

As was previously the case, the language produced at such a low pace left much to be desired. It sounded extremely flat and discontinued.

The silent pauses covered the situations in which the subjects stopped their conversations. Being too inhibited to continue, the sample remained speechless. Such behaviours were, among others, recorded in the following cases:

- *I think that ermm normal things are rather rarely (pause),*
- *...it depends only on us how people (pause),*
- *So it's the mind (pause), or*
- *I forgotten the word hmm (pause).*

Judging by the very examples, the silent pauses were of no value to the overall language production. The subjects gave up speaking, putting their thoughts aside.

As illustrated above, the category of fixed expressions turned out to constitute the second most frequently recorded disfluencies the sample used in the course of speaking. Basing on the evidence from the study, the expressions the sample made use of could be divided into two groups, namely non-erroneous and erroneous strings of language. A large proportion of the expressions (a hundred of them) belonged to the former group (see Appendix 5). These consisted in conversational routines and politeness formulas, among which the most popular were the expressions referred to as the “discourse starters”, such as *I think that, I think, I (don't) agree*, or *That's all* - the one treated as a closing speech device. The list of sentences the afore-mentioned routine formulas were encapsulated in goes as follows:

- *I think I agree with that statement,*
- *I think that I think ... or*

- *That's all I want to say about this quotation.*

Although grammatically correct, the expressions presented above had a negative effect on the subjects' overall performance, making it repetitive, and, hence, conceived of as nothing but a babble.

In contrast, the other group consisted of 4 expressions which were grammatically unacceptable. To this type referred two conversational routines and two proverbial expressions:

- **That all,*
- **I definitely can agree with it,*
- **Talk is silver but silence is gold, and*
- **We should make hay when the sun shines always.*

These utterances had a redoubled influence on the language production. Not only did they disturb the flow of speech, but they also relegated the resultant strings of the language into the category of language inaccuracies.

Third in the overall classification of disfluency markers were repetitions which amounted to 60 occurrences altogether (see Appendix 5). The very repetitions were two-fold, i.e. comprised 55 examples of doubled elements within a sentence, and 5 instances of tripled sentence constituents. In either case, the repetitive items ranged from one-word utterances such as prepositions, articles or pronouns to two-word sequences like subject-verb, to-infinitive or verb-object patterns. The doubled elements were, among other things, manifested in the following sentences:

- *Take part in in this ad,*
- *They don't like don't like changes or*
- *They don't understand they simply don't understand.*

Bearing in mind the fact that the number of repetitions affects the efficiency of communication, the doubled elements decreased it two times.

The tripled sequences, on the other hand, were evident in the sentences provided below:

- *Maybe there are some stereotypes in in in ads,*
- *People like trying like trying like new things or*
- *...who are brave enough and brave enough to to to ...*

Analogically, the tripled repetitions reduced the subjects' communicativity three times.

Reformulations, which scored 42 occurrences in total (see Appendix 5), were sub-divided into 5 types, each corresponding to a different type of action the subjects undertook when rephrasing their speech. The rephrased language sequences reflected the respondents' actions aimed at restructuring their responses, which resulted in the structure change, information shift, self-repair, synonym substitution, and language "disrepair". To begin with the structure change, it was observed on 20 different occasions, some of which included, for example:

- *It's really ermm the best way not to speak at all and to tell the truth always is really, one must be really brave to tell the truth always,*
- *We cannot we are not able to appreciate our our life, or*
- *It means ehmm that reading the more I drink the more they seem divine.*

On closer analysis, the structure change was disadvantageous to the subjects' performance. The resultant sentences were by no means more informative than their original versions.

The information shift, conceived of as the alteration of the speaker's intended meaning, scored 11 occurrences evident, among others, in the following structures:

- *...who want to show want to show off,*
- *They fear they feel terrible, or*
- *I think that all not all situations...*

The reformulations the sample made at this particular point may be considered beneficial providing they rendered the meaning the subjects intended to get across.

Self-repairs, realized in the subjects' successful attempts to correct themselves, could be noticed on 4 different occasions, notably:

- *...there are some cases when people prefers when people prefer to live...*
- *...the future can influence our presence present.*
- *When ermm the western world try tried to help poor people... or*
- *The people who talk a lot doesn't don't don't really think...*

Self-repairs are by definition compensatory, and bring about positive effects and so appeared they here.

Synonym substitution encompassed those subjects' actions, as a result of which the original words or phrases were replaced with their synonymous equivalents. There were 3 cases of that type:

- *...by giving her by paying her other compliments,*
- *... and in small I mean in not serious situations I mean, and*

- *and that's why the ermm their words sometimes aren't valueable, aren't precious at all.*

Analogously to the structure change, the “strategy” of synonym substitution was not successful, bringing about repetitiveness and simply beating about the bush on the part of the speakers.

Last but not least, disrepairs covered those reformulations which resulted in language deterioration. The 3 examples deriving from the subjects’ performance included:

- **I think the little minds are supposed the little minds equivalent of stupid people,*
- **...but they really erm but they weren't wasn't so clever, or*
- **I can I definitely can agree.*

The subjects’ actions deprived the first sentence of the verb it required, changed the form of the verb which was unacceptable in the second case, and violated the word order in the third one.

The category of all purpose words was composed of 4 types of expressions the respondents resorted to when at a loss for the right word (see Appendix 5). The expressions in question ranged from one-word utterances, such as *well*, and two-word phrases like *I mean* and *you know* to a longer unit taking on the form of *I don't know*. The subjects used them any time they faced obstacles in the course of speaking, and placed them anywhere in the sentence.

Well was used on 9 occasions, some of which included:

- *We've got critics so well thank you,*
- *...find out something well...well which reminds us..., or*
- *...because well we...*

Used by the subjects to compensate for their language gaps, the sentences constructed sounded defragmented and disconnected.

I mean was made use of 5 times, and appeared in such situations as, for example:

- *...love to our parents I mean,*
- *Love is very often one of the most often topics in everyday life I mean, or*
- *...and in small I mean in not serious situations I mean.*

This expression was equally distracting in its consequences. Instead of minimizing the impression of subjects’ difficulties with expression, it highlighted the problem raised in the situations hinted at above.

The last two phrases, i.e. *you know* and *I don't know* were equally popular and scored two occurrences each. To quote the evidence from the study, the former was encapsulated in what follows:

- *So it's really important you know, and*
- *...and now this you know for example.*

The latter, on the other hand, could be found in the following utterances:

- *They I don't know act they ..., and*
- *...many I don't know songs...*

Although equally popular and common as *well* or *I mean*, *you know* and *I don't know* expressions were not equally “influential”. Being longer in nature, they affected the language produced more severely, making it even more disconnected and meaningless.

The exact examples of the flawed speech were found in the two remaining categories, namely unfinished and meaningless sentences represented by 3 examples each. The former comprised those fragments of the subjects' performance in which the respondents were lost in thought and did not finish what they were saying. For example:

- *So it is the proof and however in modern times it is more and more difficult to help others without having money and influences in politics, industry and so on...,*
- *They try to speak a lot of..., and*
- *...who is a good example who gave us a good example than to ermmm...*

One of the consequences of the above-mentioned was certainly the speakers' inability to achieve their communicative goal.

The latter case, on the other hand, consisted in those parts of subjects' speech which were ambiguous and nonsensical, and thus classified as meaningless. To this type belonged:

- *If we because we think that their life is so tiring so hard but ehmmm the result is ermm worse than the previous state for example in Africa... (pause),*
- *...a higher standard of living in certain country people ermm people aren't happier but they have a tendency to find new and new problems, and*
- *So it's true that this people are without any values or values the most important, the most important fact is only price.*

Here, the communicative goal was by no means easier to achieve. The subjects' sentences were filled with mutually exclusive pieces of information, making it impossible for the sample to cope with.

2.3 The summary of findings

All in all, the first measurement identified 34 categories of the symptoms indicative of fossilization. Divided into 4 types, they constituted what follows:

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	18
	LACK OF SUBJECT – VERB AGREEMENT	13
	WRONG WORD ORDER	9
	WRONG STRUCTURES	8
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	8
	WRONG VERB FORMS	6
	SUBJECT OMISSION	6
	WRONG PREPOSITIONS	4
	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL & SINGULAR FORMS	3
	WRONG CONJUNCTIONS	3
	WRONG PRONOUNS	3
	VERB OMISSION	3
	LACK OF NOUN – PRONOUN AGREEMENT	2
	PROBLEMS WITH OTHER / THE OTHER	2
	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	2
	DOUBLE VERBS	2
	OMISSION OF CONJUNCTIONS	1
	DOUBLE NEGATION	1
	MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS	1
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	1
	OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS	1
	OVERUSE OF PRONOUNS	1
	MISUSE OF QUANTIFIERS	1
	WRONG TENSE	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	10
PHONOLOGY	DIFFICULTIES WITH STRESS	19
	PROBLEMS WITH VOWEL PRONUNCIATION	15
CRITERION OF FLUENCY	PAUSES	121
	FIXED EXPRESSIONS	104
	REPETITIONS	60
	REFORMULATIONS	42
	ALL PURPOSE WORDS	18
	UNFINISHED SENTENCES	3
	MEANINGLESS SENTENCES	3

Table 5.5. Oral symptoms of fossilization (measurement 1)

Taking into consideration the criterion of accuracy (Table 5.2), the so called grammatical symptoms of fossilization prevailed in terms of scope and variety. The whole body of evidence testified to 24 types of subjects' linguistic behaviours

deviating from TL grammatical norms. To the most devastating belonged subject and verb omission. Phonological and lexical symptoms appeared on a much smaller scale, being less diversified and scarcely representative. Lexis turned out to be more serious in consequences than phonology.

The criterion of fluency, on the other hand, gave rise to 7 types of reflexes of fossilization, represented by such disfluency markers as pauses, fixed expressions, repetitions, reformulations, all purpose words, unfinished and meaningless sentences. These predominated over the rest not only in terms of the frequency of appearance, but also with respect to a degree of harmfulness to the quality of the subjects' performance. Be it pauses, fixed expressions, or less common all purpose words and unfinished sentences, they all downgrade the language to a large extent. All the proportions of the exact number of occurrences and degree of influence observed are illustrated in the following figure:

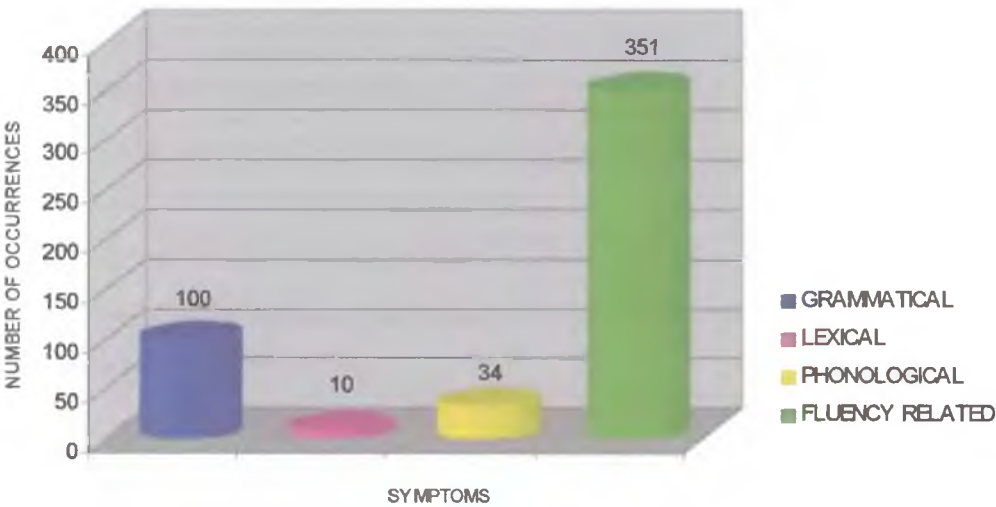


Fig. 5.1. Oral symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs fluency (measurement 1)

As seen from the above-listed, disfluencies hold their primacy over any other forms of subjects' responses, and are responsible for considerable difficulties the sample had with expression as such.

3. Oral performance – measurement 2

As was previously the case, the measurement criteria used to investigate the subjects' oral performance were two-fold. Organized around language accuracy and

fluency, the very criteria examined the language samples for inaccuracies symptomatic of fossilization.

3.1. The criterion of accuracy

The criterion of accuracy, as earlier stated, investigated the language produced by the subjects from the perspective of grammar, lexis, morphology and phonology.

3.1.1. Grammar

All the grammatical inaccuracies identified at the time of the second measurement were divided into 22 categories of language behaviours symptomatic of fossilization. Arranged from the most to the least frequent, the so called grammatical signs of fossilization constituted what follows:

- 1) MISUSE OF ARTICLES
- 2) OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 3) WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 4) WRONG WORD ORDER
- 5) LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD
- 6) LACK OF SUBJECT OR OBJECT-PRONOUN AGREEMENT
- 7) WRONG STRUCTURES
- 8) PROBLEMS WITH SOME AND A/AN
- 9) WRONG USE OF PREPOSITIONS
- 10) WRONG USE OF PRONOUNS
- 11) OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
- 12) SUBJECT OMISSION
- 13) DOUBLE VERBS
- 14) PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS
- 15) PROBLEMS WITH REPORTED SPEECH
- 16) WRONG USE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 17) WRONG VERB FORMS
- 18) PRONOUN OMISSION
- 19) VERB OMISSION
- 20) PROBLEMS WITH I OTHER/ THE OTHER
- 21) PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON
- 22) PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS

As far as the category of the misuse of articles is concerned, it scored 28 occurrences (see Appendix 6), covering the situations in which either a definite or an indefinite article was misused. The very term “misuse” was coined to stand for those articles which were mispositioned or misplaced in a sentence, as well as the instances of the article insertion where grammatically unacceptable. To name a few cases of both types, the wrongly used articles were encapsulated in the following utterances:

- *...by very a few people,
- *I think it's not a good options,
- *It had, in fact, terrible the results in history, or
- *You have to have a courage.

The article misplacement was clearly evident in the first and third case which consisted of an indefinite article between an intensifier (*very*), an indefinite determiner (*few*), and a definite article between an adjective and pronoun respectively. The sentences in which either of these articles should not have been used at all constituted no 2 and 4, each violating the rule of placing indefinite articles before singular countable nouns.

Following the classification of the grammatical symptoms of fossilization presented above, the subjects not only misused articles, but they also omitted them. The instances of the article omission were recorded on 22 occasions (see Appendix 6). They covered those linguistic situations which lacked a definite or an indefinite article. In either case, the resultant utterances were incomplete and incorrect. For example:

- *Money is good thing,
- *It could end in completely different way,
- *...look at US, or
- *That's quite true sentence.

Clear as these sentences were in terms of the speakers' intentions, they could not be accepted in terms of grammar for they did not conform to the rudimentary rules of placing an indefinite article before a noun modified by an adjective, and definite articles before selected names of the country, the USA included.

The third place was given to wrong verb patterns. This category, as the name indicates, encompassed those utterances in which the verbs were wrongly-patterned (20 in total). To quote the evidence from the study, the language forms the sample attempted at involved, for example, *to-infinitives* instead of *bare infinitives*, *that-*

clauses where *past forms* were required, or the use of *bare infinitives* where *gerunds* constituted the TL norm. As illustrated below, the inaccuracies in focus appeared in the following sentences:

- **It makes us to go abroad,*
- **I wish you that you..., or*
- **They maybe are not used to be criticised.*

Taking into account the effect of these verb patterns on the overall language production, it was not that disastrous. Although the form of the utterances was not acceptable, the content was clear.

Similar to the above-quoted was the category of wrong word order. As it was the case with the wrong verb pattern, the erroneous language forms the subjects produced were structure-related. This time, however, the subjects' language difficulties were reduced to the position and arrangement of the sentence constituents. Those mispositioned and wrongly-ordered words were observed on 15 single occasions altogether (see Appendix 6). The sentences they appeared in were as follows:

- **We also should forget,*
- **Our diet should be also combined, or*
- **We haven't yet learned that.*

As it was previously the case, the misstructured utterances did not hinder comprehension of the speakers' intentions.

Similar consequences followed from grammatical language inaccuracies referred to as the lack of subject-verb concord (10 instances in total). Mainly, this consisted in the use of *verb inflections* where unnecessary, and the lack of *inflected verbs* where required. As shown below, the examples lacking a subject-verb correspondence involved among other things:

- **Our lives makes us stronger,*
- **This make friendship, or*
- **I'm not the kind of person who think like that.*

In spite of the fact that the subject and verb were "mismatched", the sentences retained their original meaning, and were unlikely to pose any problems for whoever they were addressed to.

Analogous to the above-discussed were the utterances lacking the subject or object-pronoun agreement (10 cases of that type in toto). Classified under the same

heading, they reflected the situations in which, as the name suggests, the sentence subject and/or object did not fit the pronoun it related to, and/or was modified by. To list a few, the sentence constituents under discussion excluded each other because of the wrong number, case form or pronoun type used:

- **We are masters of our lives and we should make it this way,*
- **...losing someone's life and losing its' happiness, or*
- **...if somebody has some other beliefs that he fights for...*

Harmless as this lack of correspondence may seem at first glance, a closer examination of the above-listed sentences proves that it is unclear what the pronouns refer to in each case.

Identical in the frequency of occurrence were wrong structures. They formed a very broad category encompassing different types of erroneous sentence patterns. These comprised the use of *that-clause* where it was irrelevant, or were mirrored by the subjects' problems with *negatives* or *there is there are* construction, to name a few. The exact examples of the structures which deviated from the TL standards took on the following form:

- **I don't agree with this statement that...,*
- **No too much white bread, or*
- **Nowadays there are milk is.*

As the first two sentences are explicit and unambiguous, the third example introduces chaos right from the start. Consequently, the addressee may have difficulties with deciphering the speaker's intention, pointing to either the presence of milk in today's world, or referring to its quality.

Next in the classification of grammatical symptoms of fossilization were the subjects' problems with *some* and *a/an*, grouped under the same heading. The difficulties the group faced within this area (7 inaccuracies altogether) were evident in the formation of *a + some + noun* constructions, and the use of *some* determiner, referring to a particular person or thing without stating exactly which, where an indefinite article in the sense of "any of a kind", and not particular was required, or the other way round.

The case of the two grammar words followed by a noun can be represented by the following sentences:

- **We behave in a some special way,*
- **...should we just choose a some option.*

In spite of being grammatically incorrect, the utterances were unlikely to cause any problems at the level of meaning comprehension.

The situations where an indefinite article was wrongly substituted with a determiner in question derived from the following responses:

- **They will manage with some different task,*
- **If nobody believes in some person...*

The determiners used in the sentences above did not fit the context making references to an unspecified thing and person each time, and, hence, changed the meaning.

The reverse situation, that is a determiner inappropriately replaced with an indefinite article resulted in the following sentence:

- **A lucky person will win the lottery.*

In contrast to the previous example, the reference to “any of a kind” the subjects made here was not adequate in the situation asking for a particular person.

Not only did the subjects mistakenly use determiners instead of articles, but they also used prepositions in a wrong and inaccurate way. Out of 6 examples of that type, 5 involved prepositions of place, while the remaining ones operated within the preposition of purpose. The examples of the wrong prepositions of place were observed in the utterances presented below:

- **in our planet* instead of *on our planet*, or
- **at the first place* instead of *in the first place*.

As the first example was not ambiguous and easy to understand, the other left much to be desired. The sense of “firstly” or “primarily” the speaker wanted to convey was hidden behind the wrong preposition. It was sufficient for the whole expression to take on the new meaning, such as “at the first restaurant or cafe available”.

The wrongly-chosen preposition of cause and purpose, on the other hand, was reflected in the following expression:

- **on the sake of your health* instead of *for the sake of your health*

Judging by the resultant language sequence, there was every likelihood that the speaker was not understood.

Apart from wrong prepositions, the sample used wrong pronouns. These revealed the subjects’ difficulties with personal, possessive as well as demonstrative pronouns respectively:

- **...thinking about themselves and what are the purpose of they lives,*

- **...use all that things, and*
- **...this things.*

Regarding the effects the above-mentioned inaccuracies had on the quality of the subjects' overall performance, it turned out that the wrong pronouns used by the sample did not carry as much weight to the meaning comprehension as prepositions. As can readily be seen, the first utterance shows the subjects' inability to differentiate between a personal and possessive pronoun. The second and the third one, on the other hand, mirror the lack of correspondence between a demonstrative pronoun and the number of the noun. The sense of the sentences was retained in all cases.

The wrong use of pronouns category opened the series of 5 categories which scored 3 occurrences each. The remaining 4 involved the omission of prepositions, subject omission, the use of a "double" verb, and problems with direct/indirect questions. To be more specific, the omission of prepositions was realised in 3 sentences in which these grammatical words were left out. As presented below, the following prepositions were missing:

- **Friendship is one the most important factors (of missing),*
- **It's a kind prestige (of missing), and*
- **We are not satisfied what we have (with missing).*

The three sentences show that prepositions are by no means insignificant. Their absence makes the utterances incomplete and ambiguous. Just to name one example, the second sentence could be looked at from the perspective of attributes of prestige, not the feeling of respect and admiration as such.

The examples of subject omission, as the name suggests, were composed of the utterances devoid of the noun or the noun phrase performing the role of a subject in a sentence. The case in point constituted the following:

- **...have the vision to what should be like (it missing),*
- **... and doesn't matter how much money you have (it missing), and*
- **...is like (it missing).*

Were it not for the broader context, the utterances would not be correctly interpreted.

As opposed to the above-mentioned, the subjects produced 3 sentences resulting from the language abuse. Made up of the so called "double verbs", the very category covered the strings of the language consisting of two (consecutive) verbs. The following sentences show the inaccuracies in question:

- **General opinion's is that...,*
- **What's has been happening..., and*
- **This is sometimes doesn't work like this.*

As the consecutive verbs undergo assimilation in connected speech, they are realized as one verb. Therefore, the inaccuracies in the first two sentences are hardly ever noticed. It is not true of the third sentence which does sound ambiguous, and can be perceived as composed of more than one reference.

Structure and sentence-related were also problems with direct/indirect questions, closing the 3-occurrence categories. This time, as the research demonstrated, the subjects displayed difficulties with asking questions, namely their indirect questions took on the form of direct ones:

- **It depends who are you, me...,*
- **People who start thinking about themselves and what are the purpose..., and*
- **We should treat ourselves well and surroundings and places which should we encounter.*

The immediate reason for the subjects' question formation problems may be L1 and its influences. Polish direct and indirect questions do not differ in construction in terms of their word order. This is not the case in English, however, and the sentence listed above cannot be accepted.

Although less common among the sample (2 occurrences), the problems with reported speech added its weight to an already long list of structural inaccuracies the respondents produced. The examples of reported speech formed against its rules were noticed in the sentences below:

- **They thought that it will be good, and*
- **They thought that the Earth is for them.*

Here, the problem lies in the lack of tense correspondence, which makes the sentences difficult to understand unless there is some context provided.

Each of the remaining categories, notably wrong use of relative pronouns, wrong verb forms, verb omission, pronoun omission, problems with other/others, problems with adjective comparison, and problems with conditionals, was represented by one single example of the subject's verbal behaviour conducive to fossilization.

As regards the category of the wrong use of relative pronouns, it consisted of the sentence in which the wrong form of the pronoun, or, to be more specific, the wrong case of the pronoun was used:

- **...more than children ehmm whom parents have erm more hope and treat them as if they were the best.*

Uttered in such a way, the sentence is without a doubt the source of misunderstanding, and, consequently, puts the interlocutor off the track.

The example of the wrong verb form, as the name indicates, contained the incorrect form of the verb, notably the *infinitive* instead of the *past -ed form*. Such a language behaviour was observed in the sentence presented below:

- **We got experience when we fail.*

The problem lies in time reference the sentence relies on. The first part of it relates to the past, the other to the present, making it difficult to guess which the speaker meant.

The series of the so called “omission categories” comprised pronoun and verb omission. The former was manifested in the situation which lacked a personal pronoun. As a result of it, the utterance produced by the respondents took on the following form:

- **We simply think we can do nothing when face the problem (we missing).*

The latter, accordingly, resulted in a “verbless clause”. The case in point covered being:

- **It very really important (is missing).*

In either case, the omitted element deprived the sentence of its disambiguity. The first one resulted in the lack of precise reference to the person(s) facing the problem. The second one, on the other hand, was misleading because of the identical phonetic realization of the intensifier *very*.

As far as the “problem” categories are concerned, they reflected the hardships the subjects faced when using *other* and *others* pronouns, comparing adjectives, and forming conditions. The subjects’ problems with “other” and “others” consisted in their use of the latter instead of the former:

- **others stuff*

Taking into account a degree of miscomprehension the resultant expression caused, it was considered insignificant, and did not hinder communication.

As regards the so called “adjectival problem”, it was tightly related to the comparison of adjectives, and the formation of the correct form. As illustrated below, the desired form was not achieved. Instead, the following construct was produced:

- **in more deep meaning.*

As was previously the case, the erroneous language form did not change the speaker’s intention, and the meaning of the utterance was easy to understand.

In final, problems with conditionals were manifested in the subjects’ inability to produce a non-erroneous construction. To cite the evidence from the study, the ill-formed conditional sentence was in the shape of the following:

- **We’ll have to go through it and continue doing something even if we will occur to be bad at something, or we will disappoint somebody or disappointed ourselves.*

Judging by the example given, the content of the sentence did not suffer as much as its form. The former did not lose its meaning, whereas the latter resembled the conditional pattern typical of the Polish language, and could not be accepted.

3.1.2. Lexis

Lexis, which, as it was earlier stated, covers word usage and word combinability, gave rise to 2 categories of the so called “lexical symptoms” of fossilization:

- 1) WRONG WORD and
- 2) WRONG PHRASE/EXPRESSIONS.

The former one was confined to one-word utterances, and scored 16 occurrences altogether (see Appendix 6). It comprised 6 instances of wrong words – one-word category items that did not fit the context of a sentence, 6 examples of wrong word categories, covering the use of *adjectives* instead of *nouns*, *adjectives* instead of *adverbs*, *adjectives* instead of *verbs*, or *prepositions* where *verbs* were necessary. Finally, 4 cases of the use of *that* pronoun instead of *than* conjunction were observed. To name a few, the inaccuracies within the scope of wrong words were as follows:

- *prize* instead of *price*: **For the prize of your health,*
- *manual* instead of *manually*: **Our dissertations were written manual, and*
- *that* instead of *than*: **They think that they are better that they are.*

The subjects’ wrong choice of words had far-reaching consequences in each case. The first one was likely to be mistaken with reward, the second one treated as a

noun, and the third one gave the impression of repetition rather than comparison in a sentence.

As opposed to the above, the wrong phrase/expression category was composed of multi-word utterances, and was related to the so called “intra-phrasal” or “intra-expressional” links. Following the results from the study, one example of the wrongly-combined expression was identified. It consisted in the wrong preposition, the resultant form being:

- **in such an extent.*

Although grammatically incorrect, the expression did not cause semantic difficulties. The meaning was clear-cut.

3.1.3. Morphology

The morphological analysis examined the language produced in relation to the rules of, and restrictions on word building. As the research demonstrated, there was only one single example of the TL norm violation, encapsulated under the heading of WRONG SUFFIXES.

The incorrect form produced by the subject was built of the wrong suffix added to the word stem. As a result of it, the lexical item took on the form of:

- **egocentral* instead of egocentric.

Ridiculous and ear-catching as the word form is, those who did not know the English correct form found the very oddity appropriate.

3.1.4. Pronunciation

Taking into account the phonological properties of the language, the research revealed the subjects’ problem with individual sounds. This gave rise to one category of pronunciation inaccuracies symptomatic of fossilization, notably the category of WRONG PRONUNCIATION.

By wrong pronunciation were understood the cases of words and letters said in a wrong way, including a single phoneme pronunciation or the word stress. The problems with producing a certain phoneme occurred at 5 different occasions, revealing the following inaccuracies produced by the sample:

- *evil* pronounced with the Polish “e” sound,
- *advantage* pronounced with the “a” sound,
- *sword* said with the use of the Polish “f” sound (2 cases), and
- *chorus* uttered with the Polish “ch”.

The word stress problems, on the other hand, were represented by 2 words which the respondents in question accented in a wrong way. The stress was shifted from the second to the first syllable in the following words:

- *develop* and
- *development*.

3.2. The criterion of fluency

Analogously to the first measurement, the criterion of fluency adopted at the time of the second measurement was composed of 9 components, namely final and unfilled pauses, fillers, repetitions, false starts (reformulations), unfinished words/phrases, overreliance on certain structures, overuse of discourse markers, redundant categories, meaningless expressions.

The above-enumerated were used to investigate the language samples for easiness of expression, and flow of speech. The results testified to and identified 6 types of the so called “fluency distractors”. Grouped from the most to the least frequently occurring, the list of disfluencies constituted the following:

- 1) PAUSES
- 2) REPETITIONS
- 3) REFORMULATIONS
- 4) ALL-PURPOSE WORDS
- 5) MEANINGLESS SENTENCES and
- 6) UNFINISHED SENTENCES.

As regards pauses, they appeared in 115 utterances altogether, in the shape of 133 vocal and 24 silent pauses (see Appendix 6). Vocal pauses referred to the situations in which the subjects in question paused in the middle of what they were saying or at the beginning of their performance, deciding what to say, and filling the gaps with exclamations and hesitation sounds commonly known as fillers, or expressions of laughter. The former “means of expression” the sample notoriously made use of involved:

- *...to think and then ehmm imply our ideas...,*
- *So actually being healthy means actually er...,*
- *Hmmm...,*
- *Errm, what we should ermm is...*

The latter, that is ripples of laughter filled the subjects' performance on 6 different occasions. To list one example, the following sentence was filled in the peal of laughter on the part of the subject:

- Err, what we should ermm (*laughter*) with health....

The assumptions that filled pauses are less harmful to the oral discourse than the unfilled ones, because they enable the speakers to go on with speaking, is not necessarily true. The language based on hesitation sounds is fragmented and disconnected, and causes bigger detriments to speech than the silent pauses as such.

Silent pauses, on the other hand, mirrored the situations in which the group examined stopped speaking, and was unable to continue, leaving silent breaks between words. The utterances the subjects often finished suddenly and unexpectedly included, for example:

- *We should give them hope ... (pause),*
- *It all depends on what character... (pause), or*
- *Behind all the things... (pause).*

As the first sentence was complete before the very discourse disengagement, the second and the third were interrupted at their culmination point, as a result of which the information imparted by the subjects was useless.

The second most frequently used disfluency marker constituted repetitions. These were encapsulated in as many as 60 utterances produced by the sample. More precisely, the examples of repetitive language involved one-word units or longer strings of language which the sample duplicated when speaking. The very element(s), be it nouns, verbs, prepositions, adjectives or subject-verb sequences, were doubled, tripled or even quadrupled at a time. Basing on the research findings, the so called "double" use of word(s) was manifested in the following utterances:

- *Talking about about...,*
- *That it will it will pass away...,*
- *We have to have ermm have to have ...*

Were the sentences devoid of repetitions, the subjects would have a possibility to construct twice as many sentences as they did, and twice as informative as the above-stated.

The tripled sentence constituents were, among other things, evident in the examples below:

- *Each time we we we just have...,*

- *You have to stand up and go go go...,*
- *This will help you to to to move on.*

The tripled elements lengthened the sentences and, at the same time, reduced the subjects' communication efficiency three times.

Accordingly, the "quadrupled cases" constituted the following:

- *Is a person who knows nothing about the present world, about the, about about...,*
- *...and to to to to to reach..., or*
- *We are going to feel better, we are going to feel better, to feel better, to feel more self-confident.*

Here, the subjects' performance appeared to be four times less efficient as their responses devoid of repetitive language forms.

The subsequent category, namely the category of false "starts" or reformulations was two-fold. Further subdivided, it consisted of the sentences in which their constituent parts were rephrased by the subjects to make necessary repairs (13 cases in toto), and those fragments which were reformulated but not corrected (18 altogether). To the former type referred all the sentences which were incorrect in their original (first) version, and lost all their inadequacies when rephrased (see Appendix 6). For instance:

- *Parents often criticism, criticise their child children,*
- *...the a all things connected,*
- *Our life also should also include...*

As any corrections, the repairs the subjects implemented proved beneficial for their overall performance, the language being changed from clumsy and grammatically incorrect into the appropriate one.

To the latter type belonged the cases in which certain fragments of the sentence were rephrased by the respondents, however no attempt was made at self-repair. The sample would make use of the word/phrase substitution, synonymous expressions, or structure change respectively:

- *And when if we don't like reading...,*
- *So in my opinion, I think it's ..., or*
- *We can't say that our life is not, does not please us.*

Judging by the evidence from the study, the first two reformulations increased the length of the sentences, making them repetitive in nature. The third case, on the other

hand, showed the subjects' structural difficulties. Being incapable of finishing the *is not* pattern, the respondents transformed it into a more frequently used one.

What followed in the classification covered all-purpose words (24 occurrences altogether). It turned out that the sample treated them not only as all-purpose, but, first and foremost, as all-time units, positioning them in the initial, middle and final parts of utterances.

The expressions such as *like*, *well*, and *you know* scored 5 occurrences each (see Appendix 6). As illustrated below, *like* was found in the sequences such as:

- *It like you can read poetry..., or*
- *Its results were hmmm were bad, you know, like know, like...*

Like filled the moment of "suspension" the subjects experienced in the course of speaking.

Well was evident in the following utterances:

- *...it's erm well, you know, impossible to go back, well..., or*
- *...and ehmm and this is well hmm...*

Similarly, it served the purpose of delaying and slowing down the pace of speech

You know, to be more exact, appeared in the sentences as follows:

- *Ermm, you know..., or*
- *It's you know, so, you know....*

Being composed of two elements, this particular all-purpose "device" delayed the moment the communicative goal was achieved two times.

Slightly less "popular" appeared the expression of *I don't know* as it disturbed the flow of speech on 4 occasions (see Appendix 6). For example:

- *We can instead of, I don't know, drinking tea, coffee...,*
- *We should forget, I don't know, about vegetables not processed and, I don't know, drink...*

The distractors the sample used at this particular time were likely to make the interlocutors impatient, and put them off the track.

Building on the research findings, more sporadically used were the three last "means", that is *yeah* expression used twice, *yes* exclamation used once, and the Polish interrogative *tak* the sample resorted to on one single occasion. The sentences they were spotted in involved respectively:

- *The thing we should erm erm appreciate and yeah I'm...,*
- *And yes I think..., or*

- **Money without a health is not good, tak?*

As the first and second sentence were not potentially destructive, the third was highly confusing, particularly for the native speakers of English, owing to the very L1 word used at the end of it.

A similar degree of frequency is also ascribed to the last two categories of disfluencies, namely meaningless utterances and unfinished sentences. Meaningless utterances, which scored 5 occurrences, were composed of the flood of words, or empty wordiness, making no sense and having no point of reference as such. As illustrated below, such utterances were not only unnecessarily longish, but also fragmentary and disconnected:

- **Err, what we should ermm with health I think that we can lose everything or*
- *Because first child of Salvador Dali's parents of Salvador Dali's first child and then thought that this second child is something special.... (pause) and in such a person he become a very famous painter.*

What they resulted in was nothing but confusion on the interlocutors' part.

Last but not least in the classification of fluency distractors were unfinished sentences (5 of them altogether). These covered all the subjects' responses which, as the name indicates, were incomplete. For example:

- *They give us powerful wisdom but we can choose our future generation can use..., or*
- *I could totally agree with that statement and because I think...*

Judging by the very examples, neither of the sentences achieved a communicative goal. Interrupted at the culmination point, they turned out to be useless and of no communicative value.

3.3. The summary of findings

Summing up, the second measurement gave rise to 33 categories of linguistic behaviours indicative of fossilization, divided into 5 different types, including grammar, lexis, morphology, phonology and fluency-related symptoms of fossilization:

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	28
	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	22
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	20
	WRONG WORD ORDER	15
	LACK OF SUBJECT – VERB CONCORD	10
	LACK OF SUBJECT/OBJECT -PRONOUN AGREEMENT	10
	WRONG STRUCTURES	10
	PROBLEMS WITH SOME & A/AN	7
	WRONG USE OF PREPOSITIONS	6
	WRONG USE OF PRONOUNS	3
	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS	3
	SUBJECT OMISSION	3
	DOUBLE VERBS	3
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	3
	PROBLEMS WITH REPORTED SPEECH	2
	WRONG USE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	1
	WRONG VERB FORMS	1
	PRONOUN OMISSION	1
	VERB OMISSION	1
	PROBLEMS WITH OTHER / THE OTHER	1
	PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON	1
	PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	16
	WRONG PHRASES/EXPRESSIONS	1
MORPHOLOGY	WRONG SUFFIXES	1
PHONOLOGY	WRONG PRONUNCIATION	5
	STRESS PROBLEMS	2
CRITERION OF FLUENCY	PAUSES	157
	REPETITIONS	60
	REFORMULATIONS	31
	ALL PURPOSE WORDS	24
	MEANINGLESS SENTENCES	5
	UNFINISHED SENTENCES	5

Table 5.6. Oral symptoms of fossilization (measurement 2)

To the most diversified belonged grammatical syndromes of fossilization, consisting in 22 categories, the most significant of which were wrong structure, omission and wrong use-related categories. Rare variety and occurrence were ascribed to lexical, morphological and phonological symptoms, the most serious of which were those operating within vocabulary.

The criterion of fluency, on the other hand, distinguished 6 types of disfluencies symptomatic of fossilization, including pauses, repetitions, reformulations, all-purpose words, as well as unfinished/meaningless sentences. Judging by the figures presented below (Figure 5.2) the fluency-related symptoms of fossilization predominated in terms of the frequency of occurrence and degree of disruption to the conversational flow they caused. Although different in character, each of the disfluency markers seems to add a comparable amount of weight to the quality of the subjects’ communicative competence. The influence pauses, repetitions, reformulations, all-purpose words, and unfinished/meaningless sentences

exort on the subjects’ communicative efficiency is illustrated by the following numbers:

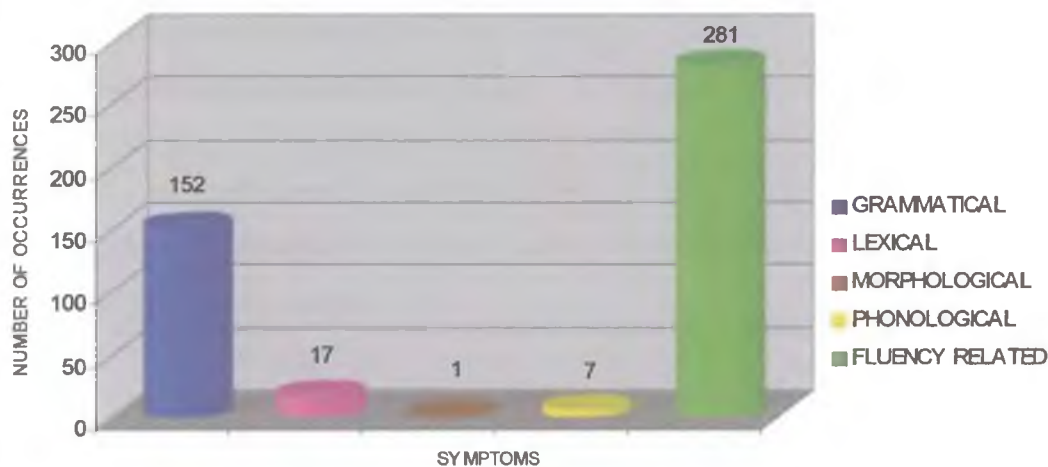


Fig. 5.2. Oral symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs fluency (measurement 2)

As can readily be seen, the disfluencies are proportionally more weighty and practically more disastrous in their consequences.

4. Oral performance – measurement 3

As was previously the case, the oral measurement criteria used were two-fold. Organized around language accuracy and fluency, they examined the language samples for both accuracies and inaccuracies symptomatic of fossilization within the areas specified.

4.1. The criterion of accuracy

The criterion of accuracy, as earlier stated, allowed for a detailed analysis of the language produced by the subjects in terms of grammar, lexis, morphology and phonology.

4.1.1. Grammar

The grammatical analysis of the subjects’ oral performance resulted in 22 categories of the subjects’ verbal behaviours conducive to fossilization. Arranged from the most to the least commonly observed reflexes of fossilization, they constituted the following:

- 1) OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 2) MISUSE OF ARTICLES

- 3) WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 4) OMISSION OF VERB INFLECTIONS
- 5) WRONG WORD ORDER
- 6) WRONG STRUCTURES
- 7) WRONG TENSE
- 8) WRONG PREPOSITIONS
- 9) WRONG PRONOUNS
- 10) PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS
- 11) PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS
- 12) VERB OMISSION
- 13) SUBJECT OMISSION
- 14) DOUBLE VERBS
- 15) LACK OF PRONOUN-NOUN AGREEMENT
- 16) LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT
- 17) PROBLEMS WITH SINGULAR/PLURAL FORMS
- 18) OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
- 19) OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 20) OBJECT OMISSION
- 21) WRONG VERB FORMS
- 22) DOUBLE NEGATION.

As far as the category of the omission of articles is concerned, it contained 23 examples of utterances lacking an indefinite or a definite article (see Appendix 7). More specifically, the former one was avoided on 16 different occasions, whereas the latter was omitted 7 times. Following the results from the study, the instances of the language strings devoid of an indefinite article included among other things:

- **in difficult situation,*
- **That is very important thing. or*
- **...such trick.*

The first and second sentence violated the rules of placing indefinite articles before countable nouns. The third one, on the other hand, flouted the rule regulating the use of *such a an* expression followed by adjectives.

To name a few expressions deprived of definite articles, accordingly, the following utterances were selected.

- **I wouldn't say that love is like measles,*

- **...where Prime Minister..., or*
- **...suffer from measles.*

Here, two sentences (no 1 and 3) did not obey the rule of inserting definite articles before the names of diseases. Sentence no 2 lacked definiteness before a proper noun. None of them, however, hindered comprehension of the speakers' intentions.

The second most common grammatical inaccuracies gave rise to the category of the misuse of articles in ex equo with the category of the wrong verb patterns. The former covered the cases in which either an indefinite or a definite article was wrongly used (see Appendix 7). This entailed the language situations in which a definite article was unnecessarily inserted, or an indefinite article was inessentially incorporated into a sentence. Building on the research findings, there were 4 occurrences of ill-used definite articles. These were observed in the following utterances:

- **We need the variety,*
- **...in the Hungary...,*
- **...sometimes the people lie ..., or*
- *People wouldn't have the pleasure from the life.*

Judging by the examples given, the sentences gave evidence of further problems the articles as such posed for the sample in question. The subjects seemed to have no idea of the so called zero article in such situations as uncountable or proper nouns.

The remaining 6 inaccuracies reflected the reverse situation, namely the use of an indefinite article where it should not have been placed under any circumstances. Such cases were evident in the utterances below:

- **...a crazy thoughts,*
- **...if you have a knowledge,*
- **a hot water, or*
- **a great weather.*

Again, the instances provided broke the rule of an indefinite article omission before uncountable, and plural nouns as such. The extent of difficulties articles in general make for the Polish learners and users of English can be attributed to L1-L2 discrepancies, consisting in the absence of articles as such in the former and a wide range of the article usage rules in the latter.

The latter, notably the category of wrong verb patterns consisted of 10 instances of utterances built of wrongly-patterned verbs. This involved, for example,

the use of the *verb + object* pattern where it was grammatically unacceptable, reliance on a *that-clause* instead of an *infinitival form*, or the choice of a *bare infinitive* where a *gerund* or *to-infinitive* was the TL norm. To list a few examples of the above-stated, the following incorrect verb patterns are provided:

- *...to treat them something that has ever happened,
- *I find that love is definite,
- *I go laugh, or
- *It doesn't allow to lie.

In comparison to articles, erroneous verb patterns did affect the language production in a negative way. A striking example was sentence no 3, resembling the so called basic English, not the proficiency level required of the English philology students.

The third place in the overall classification of grammatical inaccuracies was given to the omission of verb inflections. This category encompassed 5 sequences of language lacking a 3rd person singular inflection each. The verbs in question and missing inflections were noticed in what follows:

- *Everybody like that,
- *...this person do it,
- *...she find herself,
- *This make..., and
- *It make them...

Although the lack of inflections was not subject to change the meaning of the utterances produced by the respondents, the form was unacceptable, and, as it was previously the case, typical of elementary/intermediate rather than advanced students.

Next, there was a series of 5 categories which scored 4 occurrences each. To this group belonged those erroneous language forms constituting the examples of the wrong word order, wrong structures, wrong tense, as well as the instances of wrong prepositions and wrong pronouns. To start with the wrong word order, the very category comprised the cases in which the sentence constituents were misplaced and misarranged. For example, the initial sentence elements took the final position, middle-position adverbs were placed instead of auxiliary verbs, or the other way round. To the first type referred the sentences presented below:

- *It's one of the big truths in life this quotation,

- **A person who knows that something that ermm nothing can have the price also.*

Structured in this way, the utterances were likely to cause problems with understanding, mainly because of the sentence subject placed in the end.

The second case, i.e. the wrong adverb position, was represented by the remaining 3 utterances, namely:

- **...as I have said already,*
- **People always have tried to fight, and*
- **A person who knows that something that ermm nothing can have the price also.*

Judging by the examples given, the adverb misplacement seems to be less destructive for comprehension.

Similar in character to the above-presented were wrong structures. These covered 4 examples of ill-formed constructions, including two instances of a wrongly built tense, and two non-inverted utterances. The former inaccuracies were manifested in the incorrect forms of the present simple and past simple tense respectively:

- **We aren't feel safe. and*
- **I was enjoy.*

Although erroneous in terms of forms, the sentences were relatively easy to comprehend.

The latter, accordingly, was represented by the following "inversionless" sentences:

- **Only then our life is complete. and*
- **Not only I work here.*

In similar vein, the meaning of the utterances was retained.

The structure-related problems the subjects encountered were also evident in the utterances composed of the wrong tense. Basing on the evidence from the study, the *Past Simple* tense was used instead of the *Present Perfect*, the *Present Simple* was formed instead of the *Past Simple*, the *Present Simple* substituted the desired past, or the *future in the past* construction was used instead of the *would+infinitive* structure. The exact examples included:

- **PM doesn't say the truth and has a lot of problems now,*
- **I said that I'm pretty well prepared,*

- **I said, 'yes, thank you, ma'am', and I go laugh, and*
- **If I said I was not prepared, I would have get got...*

This time, the sentences produced by the subjects were misleading. It was the wrong time reference the subjects relied on to be blame for any comprehension difficulties.

Subsequently, the category of wrong prepositions covered those sequences of language which were made up of verbs followed by prepositions. All the cases in focus involved the inappropriate preposition, resulting in the unacceptable verb+preposition combining form. For example:

- **Believe for what you hear,*
- **Believe for the half of what you see,*
- **...decorate in too many things, or*
- **When a person does something wrong, bad, it's something under that.*

All of the examples provided above confirmed widespread assumptions about real difficulties prepositions made for the Polish learners and users of English as a FL.

The subjects' wrong choice of pronouns brought about the last of the 4-occurrence categories, notably the category of wrong pronouns. It consisted in 2 inappropriate forms of demonstrative pronouns, as well as a wrongly selected possessive and relative pronoun. To illustrate the above-mentioned with examples, the following utterances are listed:

- **...those one who...,*
- **These sort of thing,*
- **...human in their behaviour, and*
- **...that they whose lie better...*

Judging by the level of comprehensibility these utterances maintained, the last two constituted potential causes of misunderstanding, the former being ambiguous in terms of the number, the latter in terms of the case the pronouns represented.

Further in the classification appeared the subjects' problems with direct and indirect questions in ex equo with the difficulties the respondents faced in relation to the condition sentences. In either case, the sample produced 3 erroneous constructions. The problems with question formation consisted in the subjects' inability to build a proper indirect question. Instead of the affirmative sentence pattern, the subjects relied on the rules of forming interrogatives, producing direct questions, such as:

- **It's very difficult to say what does it mean,*

- **I have no idea what is this sentence about, and*
- **...to estimate how much does it cost or how...*

Searching for the reasons of subjects' difficulties with indirect questions, L1 interference seems to play a part here. All of the sentences convey the meaning the speakers intended to express, but in the form typical of the Polish language.

The subjects' problems with conditionals, on the other hand, were reduced to the so called one-part-of-a-sentence problems. This resulted in a division of each sentence produced by the sample into the fragment grammatically correct and grammatically unacceptable. For example:

- **He wouldn't help him if he hadn't money,*
- **If the person was not so good, he lies to somebody, or*
- **If I said I was not prepared, I would have get got...*

As can readily be seen, especially misleading was sentence no 2 as it dropped clear references to the situation and point of time at which it happened.

What followed was a group of 3 categories which scored two occurrences each (see Appendix 7). The grammatical inaccuracies ranged from verb and subject omission to the double verb category. The category of verb omission covered two utterances in which the verb was not included, making the whole sentence difficult to understand, For example:

- **We just have to and express it, and*
- **...because love, happiness in life, the true love probably once the same as some illnesses.*

Disruptions to communication were caused by gaps each of the sentences included.

In similar vein, the category of subject omission covered the two occasions on which the sentence subject was excluded from the sentence, making it incomplete. The resultant utterances took on the following form:

- **If want to do something, we have to be sure. and*
- **For many people is you know...*

Again, the problems lied in the lack of particular reference to the person in the first case, and the thing/object in the second.

As opposed to omissions, the two cases of double verb use showed the subjects' tendencies to overproduction or language abuse, especially visible when the verbs were placed consecutively in a sentence. To this type belonged:

- **That's ermm reveals..., and*
- **It's makes us...*

As regards the influence the above-listed had on the quality of the language produced, it was obviously impaired owing to the appearance of “double verbs” unacceptable according to the syntactic rules. The semantics, however, seems not to be affected at all as the doubled elements were assimilated in the connected speech, leaving no traces of inaccuracies when pronounced.

The 8 remaining categories were one-occurrence categories (see Appendix 7). These constituted several groups, such as the omission-related category, the so called “concord-lacking” category, problem-arising, as well as misuse and abuse-based categories. As regards the omission categories, they were three-fold, and covered a preposition, a relative pronoun and a sentence object accordingly. In the first case, the sentence produced by the subjects lacked the preposition of place:

- **...depends on a situation she find herself.*

The underlying reasons for such deviations from TL norms are likely to be accounted for L1 interference. The Polish rules do not allow such flexibility in the use of prepositions.

The second “omission case” was tightly connected with the relative that/which pronoun excluded from the sentence. It resulted in what follows:

- **It's a specific situation can show her real face.*

Constructed in this way, the sentence can be interpreted in two ways; one revealing the qualities of the very situation, the other pointing to the role and purpose it serves. Accordingly, the omission of the sentence object brought about an equally incomplete utterance, namely:

- **...whether we want or not.*

Incomplete as this utterance was, it did not lose its meaning, and was clear for the person it was addressed to.

As far as the concord-lacking situations are concerned, they were categorised as the lack of subject-verb and lack of pronoun-noun agreement respectively. The former consisted in the sentence in which the form of the subject did not match the verb:

- **Follow me and we follows you.*

The latter, on the other hand, reflected the situation in which the pronoun did not correspond to the noun it preceded. It brought about the following sequence of words:

- *...any of those quotation...

Neither the former nor the latter example of non-correspondences hindered comprehension of the utterances the subjects produced.

The so called “problematic case” had its source in the underlying rules of forming plurality. The exact example violating the rule in focus was observed in what follows:

- *...somewhere elses...

Analogously to the previous category, the very deviant language form did not cause any communication problems whatsoever.

The category of “misuse” referred to the wrong use of the verb form, illustrated in the following example:

- *Everyone can gives...

The utterance, although grammatically unacceptable, was considered to be semantically “non-invasive”.

Last but not least, the term “abuse” stood for the use of two negation elements in a sentence, at the same time giving rise to the double negation category. The resultant structure took on the following form:

- *When somebody is lonely and doesn't have no contacts with other people...

The use of two negative elements in a sentence mirrors the Polish syntactic rules. It is one of the most notorious linguistic behaviours the subjects display with respect to negations, regardless of their proficiency level. Incorrect in terms of grammar, the negation meaning was retained, and communicative goal was attained.

4.1.2. Lexis

The lexical analysis of oral text samples brought about one single category of the symptoms indicative of fossilization, namely the WRONG WORD category. The wrong word category covered 18 lexemes, 7 of which consisted in the wrong word class usage, 10 of which reflected inaccuracies within the same word category, and 1 was a classic example of the phenomenon referred to as the “slip of the tongue”. To the first type belonged, for instance:

- *presence* instead of *present*: *...future influences the *presence*,
- *mobilise* instead of *motivate*: *It *mobilises* them to work,

- say instead of tell: *...*say the truth*.

The first and second cases are highly ambiguous; the former referring to the existence of something/somebody read from the speaker's intentions, not the period of time happening now, the latter, on the other hand, has military connotations, and does not denote giving reasons for doing something.

To the second type referred for example:

- noun instead of verb: *effect* instead of *affect*: **It can effect their life*,
- adjective instead of adverb: *total* instead of *totally*: **It's total boring things*,
- verb instead of adjective: *enjoy* instead of *enjoyable*: **It's something enjoy*.

Here, the second and third example leave much to be desired; the former being possibly interpreted as total and boring things, the latter meaning something funny, or being understood as an imperative getting someone to take pleasure from something.

The third type, on the other hand, was found in the following sentence:

- *half* instead of *hard*: **It's half to find a man who...*

As in a classic slip of the tongue, the speaker corrected him/herself before the mistake was actually noticed, thus leaving no room for speculations about what he/she wanted to say.

4.1.3. Morphology

As opposed to grammar and lexis, morphology did not pose any difficulties for the subjects, either in terms of the structure or phrases, or formation of single lexical units.

4.1.4. Pronunciation

Evidently, the problems arised with respect to the pronunciation of individual sounds. As the research demonstrated, the subjects had a propensity to mispronounce certain phonemes (15 cases of mispronunciation in total) or omit certain phonemes in their actual performance (one omission case altogether). The former case was, among other things, observed in the realization of the following sounds:

- *noval* pronounced with "a" sound
- *obvious* uttered using the letter "u", and
- *chaos* resembling the Polich "ch" sound in its realization.

Judging by the examples given above, it was mainly the first and the third one that seemed to be responsible for misunderstandings and, consequently, disruptions to the conversation.

The latter situation, i.e. the phoneme omission was noticed in the pronunciation of the following:

- *dentist* pronounced with t-omission

This particular pronunciation deficit was, in fact, insignificant and unlikely to bring about communication problems, let alone the blockage of communication.

4.2. The criterion of fluency

The criterion of fluency, as was previously the case, examined the language produced by the sample for easiness of communication, or, to put it differently, investigated the subjects' ability to speak the TL well, smoothly and quickly. The deviations from TL norms were grouped into 5 categories. The order they follow below mirrors the frequency of occurrence of a given disfluency marker:

- 1) PAUSES
- 2) REPETITIONS
- 3) OVERUSE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS
- 4) ALL PURPOSE WORDS and
- 5) REFORMULATIONS.

Following the research findings, 248 cases of the pauses were recorded (see Appendix 7), 186 of which constituted the so called vocal pauses, whereas the remaining 62 conversation breaks were silent in nature. The term vocal pauses stood for any kind of verbal behaviour exhibited by the subjects, with the intention of filling in the gaps at the moment of their speaking, be it in the middle of the sentence or in its initial position. The "means" the subjects resorted to in such situations are commonly referred to as "fillers". These ranged from verbal behaviours, such as the use of hesitation sounds, an exclamation mark or subjects' L1 to non-verbal means represented by subjects' ripples of laughter. To quote the evidence from the study, the hesitation sounds the sample most often relied on were encapsulated in the following utterances:

- *You can have such ermm feeling*
- *Hmmm... and hmmm there's no end to it or*
- *They hmmm a appeal to...*

Deriving from the examples provided, the resultant sentences were disconnected and, in consequence, disruptive to the conversational flow.

As regards the exclamation mark, it was used on one single occasion, giving rise to the following sentence:

- *Oh, I totally agree.*

It turned out to have no influence on either speech production or reception.

The subjects' L1 (the Polish language) was observed on 5 different occasions, and resulted in what follows:

- **You shouldn't coś tam people coś tam, or*
- **I just nie mam pojęcia.*

The mixture of language the utterances were made up of revealed the subjects' language gaps, lexical in particular, blocking both communication and comprehension.

The non-verbal yet vocal reactions the subjects produced consisted in their bursts of laughter, recorded on the following occasions:

- *It's quite interesting I mean (laughter), or*
- *...and some some ermm excitement (laughter).*

Judging by the examples hinted at above, there is no denying the fact that the expressions of laughter were of no value to oral discourses. The sentences the subjects uttered when laughing were unclear on the one hand, and, on the other hand, usually remained unfinished.

The final pauses, accordingly, covered the situations in which the respondents in question immediately stopped speaking (see Appendix 7). Put off the track, and, more often than not, at a loss to know how to develop their thoughts, the subjects finished their performance. As illustrated below, the silent pauses appeared in a variety of situations:

- *Never do something or say something...(pause),*
- *It's an endless story ...(pause), or*
- *It's something under that...(pause).*

Their effect was similar to that of the above-mentioned in that that they were the closing part of the subjects' performance each time.

The second most commonly used fluency distractors were repetitions. Out of 84 examples of repetitive language forms, 77 were doubled, 6 were tripled and 1 quadrupled (see Appendix 7). In either case, the repetitions ranged from single words, such as prepositions, verbs or nouns to subject-verb patterns, taking on an initial, middle and/or final sentence position. To quote the evidence from the study, the so called "doubled elements" were found in the following sentences:

- *If it's it's ...,*

- *I wouldn't care to to make..., or*
- *....with with many activities.*

Building on the very examples, the doubled elements lengthened the time of language production two times, reducing, at the same time, the communicative value of the message.

The tripled sentence constituents, could be exemplified in what follows:

- *....something which which which...,*
- *III ...,*
- *...so yes yes yes.*

Analogously, the tripled elements proportionally increased the production time, delaying the moment the communicative goal was achieved.

The quadrupled element, as illustrated below, was found in the following:

- *...to explain ermm explain what what what 'll what 's going on.*

This one was even more communication-delaying and content-reducing in its consequences.

The third most frequently used disfluencies were referred to as fixed expressions (76 in total). The expressions the subjects resorted to constituted a number of idiomatic phrases used in every-day conversations. The most popular ones involved *I think* and *that's all*, *I think that*, *that's it* and *thank you*, *I (don't) agree* and *it's all*.

The circumstances under which the sample relied on the above-enumerated conversational routines and politeness formulas were reflected in the following sentences:

- *I think that plays an important role in...,*
- *I agree with it,*
- *So...that's it I think, or*
- *It's all I got to say.*

Although all of the utterances were grammatically correct, they deprived the subjects' language of naturalness and easiness of expression. What is more, the cases overloaded with routine expressions were devoid of their semantic value.

All purpose words, which were given the third place, covered 66 occurrences of expressions ranging from one-word to multi-word utterances the subjects used any time they had difficulties with expressing themselves. The "all time words" consisted of 8 types of "means" which helped the particular subjects to gather their thoughts

and decide what to say next. The problems the informants faced were nivalated by means of *well, I mean, you know* and *I don't know* used in the following situations

- *well as far as I'm concerned...*,
- *It's quite interesting I mean,*
- *...will say some you know like well....,*
- **...great example for this is like I don't know Da Vinci Code.*

A perfect example of meaning depreciation seems sentence no 3 which, being composed of 7 words, does not say a word.

Less “popular” were *yeah* and *yes* words, either of them used four times altogether, or *like* and *OK* which appeared appeared on 3 occasions each:

- *...yeah and but err....,*
- *Well, yes,*
- *...just do something visible like ermm,*
- *OK.*

Being shorter in nature, the above-listed caused comparatively smaller disruptions to conversational fluency of the discourse.

Reformulations comprised 46 cases of the strings of the language the subjects rephrased in the course of speaking. The strategies they used when reformulating their statements were two-fold, i.e. reflecting the subjects' intention to correct their speech, and those revealing the lack of subjects' intention to make “self-repairs”. The examples of the former were observed on 10 occasions, encapsulated in such sentences as:

- *Nobody can be a an exceptionally good liar, or*
- *Nothing meaning nothing meaningless.*

The corrections the subjects made, as any corrections, had a positive effect on the quality of their language production, and, more importantly, showed the subjects' ability to spot the mistake and correct it while speaking.

The subjects' actions which were not aimed at corrections as such involved 29 cases consisting in the structure and information change. To this type belonged the following sentences:

- *People should shouldn't say too much, or*
- *...quotation quotations are said.*

As opposed to the afore-said examples, the sentences the speakers produced at this point were grammatically correct, so any changes they made were mainly aimed at meaning alteration.

The 4 remaining cases, on the other hand, were based on synonym substitutions, such as:

- ...all the experiences we gain, various experiences we gain.

This example testified to subjects’ attention to detail.

4.3. The summary of findings

Taking everything into consideration, the third measurement distinguished 29 language categories symptomatic of fossilization, divided into 4 types, such as grammatical, lexical, phonological and fluency-related signs of fossilization.

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	23
	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	10
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	10
	OMISSION OF VERB INFLECTIONS	5
	WRONG WORD ORDER	4
	WRONG STRUCTURES	4
	WRONG TENSE	4
	WRONG PREPOSITIONS	4
	WRONG PRONOUNS	4
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	3
	PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS	3
	VERB OMISSION	2
	SUBJECT OMISSION	2
	DOUBLE VERBS	2
	LACK OF PRONOUN-NOUN AGREEMENT	1
	LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT	1
	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL/SINGULAR FORMS	1
	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS	1
	OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	1
	OBJECT OMISSION	1
	WRONG VERB FORMS	1
	DOUBLE NEGATION	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	18
PHONOLOGY	PROBLEMS WITH PRONUNCIATION	16
CRITERION OF FLUENCY	PAUSES	248
	REPETITIONS	84
	FIXED EXPRESSIONS	76
	ALL PURPOSE WORDS	66
	REFORMULATIONS	46

Table 5.7. Oral symptoms of fossilization (measurement 3)

Deriving from the table, to the most diversified symptoms of fossilization within the criterion of language accuracy belonged those grammar-related ones (22

categories altogether). Lexical and phonological fossilization syndromes were one-fold, yet more numerous than most of the grammatical categories.

As regards the criterion of fluency, it gave rise to 5 different types of disfluency markers, prominence being given to pauses and repetitions. As illustrated below, these not only prevailed in terms of the frequency of occurrence, but also with respect to the extent to which they downgraded the subjects’ interlanguage:

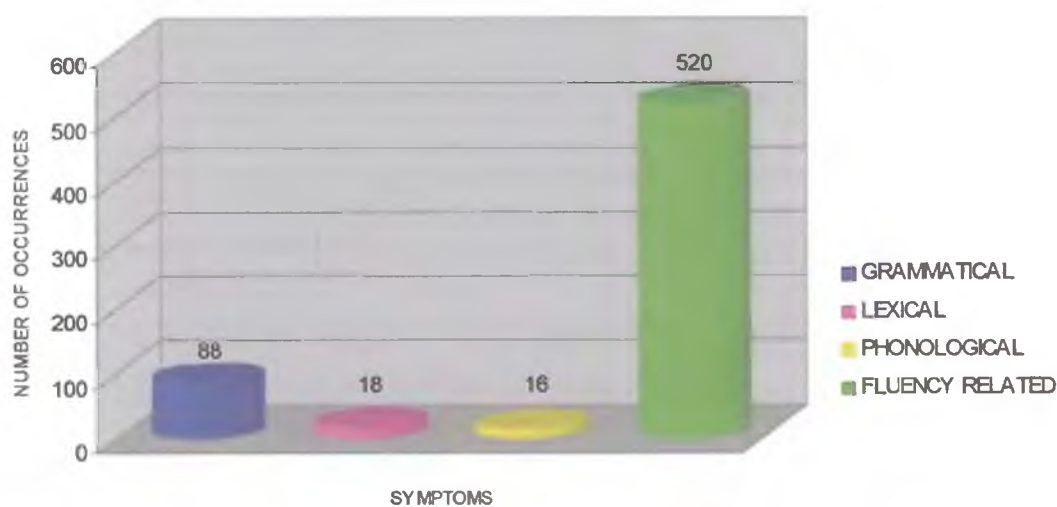


Fig. 5.3 Oral symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs fluency (measurement 3)

Following the figures presented above, it is evident how the instances of the inaccurate language *sensu stricto* were outbalanced by the occurrences of non-fluent language production.

5. Written performance – measurement 1

A discussion presented below focuses on the so called “written symptoms” of fossilization identified at the time of the first measurement. The very signs of fossilization embody erroneous and non-erroneous language patterns and behaviours exhibited by the subjects within the area of accuracy and text cohesion. The exact criteria selected for the purposes of the study included:

Criterion	Frequency of occurrence
● the criterion of accuracy:	
- grammar	
- lexis	
- morphology	
- spelling	
- punctuation	
● the criterion of text coherence:	
- fillers	
- repetitions	
- false starts (reformulations)	
- unfinished words/phrases	
- overreliance on certain structures	
- overuse of discourse markers	
- redundant categories	
- meaningless expressions	

Table 5.8 The measurement criteria for written text samples

Viewed from this perspective, the analysis of the outcomes of the study is two-staged, i.e. it operates on the components of language exactness, and principles of whole-text linearity.

5.1. The criterion of accuracy

When undertaking the problem of (in)accuracy of language production, several aspects must be taken into account. The present analysis is organised around and relies on the earlier-stated language categories (5 in toto). They are subsumed under the name of grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling and punctuation. Grammar encapsulates parts of speech and sentence parts; their meanings and functions in the overall system of the language, as well as the ways they are combined to produce sentences in the language. Lexis is understood as a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words and idioms. It covers the meaning of words and restrictions on how they can be used together. Morphology encompasses morphemes; their different forms and ways they combine to form words. Spelling involves the formation of words with the correct letters and in the correct order. Punctuation, on the other hand, refers to the use of punctuation marks according to their function, i.e. division of phrases and sentences and/or making the meaning clearer.

5.1.1. Grammar

The grammatical inaccuracies the first measurement gave rise to were classified into 14 groups representing 14 symptoms of fossilization, each being identified on the basis of the incidence and frequency of occurrence of a given linguistic pattern and/or form. Arranged from the most frequent to rare and single occurrences, the “grammatical” symptoms of fossilization involve:

- 1). OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 2). WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 3). MISUSE OF PRONOUNS
- 4). WRONG SENTENCE PATTERNS
- 5). PROBLEMS WITH NUMBER
- 6). MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
- 7). MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 8). OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
- 9). LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD
- 10). OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 11). PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS
- 12). MISUSE OF ARTICLES
- 13). PROBLEMS WITH CASE
- 14). OMISSION OF VERBS

Omission of articles, as the name suggests, covered all the samples of the language devoid of either definite or indefinite articles. As the research demonstrated, this lack of articles appeared to be among the commonest and most persistent behavioural reflexes within the above-stated classification. It reached the highest score, i.e. 16 occurrences (see Appendix 8), and, at the same time, gave evidence of subjects’ ignorance and incompleteness in their grammatical competence, manifested, among other things, via the examples below:

- * *if you are good person,*
- * *Such person is able to do it,*
- * *conduct good life,*
- * *in everyday situation.*

The resultant utterances, although grammatically incorrect, were perfectly comprehensible to potential addressees they were aimed at.

Wrong verb patterns, that is the instances of the wrong verb usage, appeared on 8 single occasions (see Appendix 8), and, hence, received the second place in the above-presented classification. The exact examples of the inaccurate language production in this area comprised, above all, such sentences as the following:

- **They let us to get there,*
- **You'll make that our life makes sense,*
- **It's worth to travel,*
- **Resign your work.*

As hinted at above, the sample represented a poor knowledge of verb phrase, using *to-infinitives* instead of *gerunds*, *infinitives without to* or *that-clauses* where unacceptable, or verbs lacking prepositions where *verb + preposition* patterns were the TL standard accordingly.

Further in classification were those symptoms of fossilization which consisted in the wrong use of pronouns. Out of 7 cases of misuse, 3 operated on possessive pronouns, 2 covered reflexive pronouns, 1 was committed on demonstrative pronouns and 1 involved personal pronouns. To quote the evidence from the study, the wrong pronoun realizations provoked and produced such impaired language forms as:

- **theirs own,*
- **ours beliefs,*
- **the other person into consideration and their opinion,*
- **to fulfill ourself on life,*
- **It seems that the most important thing in life is to be yourself,*
- **That beliefs ...,*
- **Those who do not make their lives varied and just take it as it is ...*

Especially ambiguous appeared the sentences composed of the wrongly-used possessive and personal pronouns, the former (sentence no 3) containing no reference to the sentence subject, the latter (sentence no 7) lacking a correspondence between the sentence object and the pronoun *it*.

The fourth place on the above list was given to as many as three different types of behavioural reflexes indicative of fossilization. Whether it be problems with number, wrong sentence patterns or misuse of prepositions, the number of erroneous language forms amounted to 4 in all cases. Regarding the very problems with the number, these arised at the level of nouns; their plural and singular forms. The

difficulties the subjects faced at this particular point constituted the formation of plural instead of singular noun forms (**lives* instead of *life*), and singular nouns where the plural ones were required (**several example*). Additionally, 2 cases of ill-formed plurality were spotted. They were reflected in the following sentences:

- **They need teachers in their live,*
- **We are more satisfied with our lifes.*

The first case was unclear due to the verb used by the sample at the end of the sentence. The problem the subjects encountered in the second case lied in the wrong letter the noun was built of, it exerting no influence on the sentence meaning in general.

Wrong sentence patterns, similar to wrong verb patterns, were represented by incorrect structures and/or sentences produced by the sample. The examples collected in the course of the study involved:

- **My conclusion is not as optimistic I wish it were,*
- **... as many people in the world such many beliefs,*
- **If we treat wealth as a synonym of happiness, there is not enough to talk about.*

The first two sentences revealed the respondents' difficulties with comparison and comparative *as* elements. The third one, on the other hand, showed the subjects' problems with *there is there are* structure.

The third type in this group, notably the misuse of prepositions included the instances of wrong or unnecessary prepositions, encapsulated in the following expressions:

- **I can influence on somebody's behaviour,*
- **Live with your beliefs,*
- **The rules imposed from us,*
- **...proof for it.*

The immediate reason for the above-presented was the subjects' L1 influence. Actually, the utterances produced by the sample mirrored the patterns and position of prepositions to be followed in Polish.

What followed was the case of the misuse of relative pronouns, composed of 3 instances of a wrong pronoun used:

- **The group who...,*
- **There are many of us that really live their beliefs,*

- **Everybody has got some beliefs in life according to what they live.*

Again, L1 interference seemed to play a significant part in each case, resulting in the subjects' inability to discriminate between the relative *who* used with animate objects, and *which* placed together with inanimate objects.

Also, 3 occurrences of language inappropriacy were produced by the sample within the area of the subject-verb concord. The examples of the reverse situation, i.e. the lack of subject-verb agreement comprised the following:

- **Travelling let us...,*
- **It possess its own rules,*
- **One experience new things.*

The source of the problems was the omission of 3rd person singular verb inflections.

Slightly less "popular" than the afore-mentioned appeared omissions of prepositions. Only two examples of the very linguistic behaviour were recorded. The resultative language performance was composed of such inaccuracies as:

- **According our beliefs...,*
- **...rules imposed by the policy of the country.*

The utterances the subjects created constituted a direct reflection of L1 grammatical rules, excluding prepositions from equivalent Polish sentences.

Finally, to the least frequent symptoms of fossilization referred those under the label of the omission of relative pronouns, problems with direct/indirect questions, misuse of articles, problems with case, as well as verb omission. As it was in other cases of omission, the omission of relative pronouns brought about the incompleteness of the language produced by the respondents, and, at the same time, led to grammatically unacceptable linguistic behaviours. The case in point is, for example, the following sentence-long response:

- **My passivity is the worst thing could happen to me or other people.*

The sentence could be divided into two parts and read in two ways; the first one referring to passivity and its bad quality, the second equaling the worst thing and unlikelihood of its incidence.

Single occurrences of erroneousness were common to all the symptoms mentioned beforehand. Accordingly, problems with direct/indirect questions, violating word order in most cases, were reduced to one only, and constituted the subjects' unsuccessful attempt to produce a correct sentence:

- **It depends on how do we look at the world.*

Searching for the reasons justifying the use of a direct instead of an indirect question, L1 influence seems to play a significant part here. The sentences in question do not differ in Polish. Yet, they follow two different patterns in English.

As far as the misuse of articles is concerned, the language performance observed at this point consisted in the use of an indefinite article before a plural noun form:

- **...in a very hard times.*

Clearly, the subjects violated the rule of the zero article before the plural noun surroundings. As the Polish language system does not rely on articles as such, the cases such as the above present special difficulties for the Polish language learners and users.

Verb omission, as the name suggests, covered the situation(s) in which verb(s) were left out. An example of the incomplete language production proved the lack of the verb in the following expression:

- **What more.*

The resultant utterance shows nothing but the effect of the L1 transfer, consisting in the “verbless” form of the expression used in Polish.

Last but of course not least, one piece of evidence revealing the subject’s problems with case was collected. It testified to the use of a nominative case in a situation which required a genitive one:

- **If we make mistakes, they are ours, not the other person.*

Here, the erroneous language forms are evidently the result of the subject’s lack of knowledge, and “disobedience” to the rules stipulating the use of the Saxon genitive.

5.1.2. Lexis

The scope of “lexical” symptoms of fossilization was restricted to 2 different types, distinguished in accordance with the frequency of the item occurrence. As was previously the case, the outcomes of the study are presented in the order reflecting the incidence of erroneous language production, from the most to the least frequently appearing linguistic units. The classification of symptoms comprises:

- 1). WRONG WORDS and
- 2). WRONG COLLOCATIONS.

The wrong word category included 12 instances of wrong words, i.e. lexical items which do not fit the context, changing the meaning of utterances, let alone the subjects’ intentions (see Appendix 8). Apart from that, the examples of wrong word

usage covered the cases of the wrong part of speech used. To name a few examples, the subjects' inappropriate choices were as follows:

- *differ* instead of *differentiate*: **These beliefs differ us from each other*,
- *consequence* instead of *consistency*: **Hard work and consequence are the key to success*,
- *separated* instead of *single*: **One separated man without other people is deprived of possibilities of changing the world*,
- *Live* instead of *life*: **Their live is a one-page book*.

As the first and the last example do not bring much confusion to the discourse, the other two cases are largely ambiguous; the former referring to the importance rather than patterned behaviour or style consistency denotes, the latter, on the other hand, pointing to a person not longer living together as a married couple rather than indicating someone acting individually.

By contrast, wrong collocations turned out to be not only strictly limited in scope, but also in number. They consisted in unacceptable word combinations which, matter-of-factly, appeared only on one single occasion:

- **make miracles*.

The very form of the collocation can be accounted for subjects' inability to distinguish between do and make, and restrictions on their combinability. Such a distinction does not exist in Polish.

5.1.3. Morphology

The morphological analysis gave rise to 1 group of symptoms classified as indicative of fossilization, namely WRONG PREFIXES.

It was represented by two examples which violated the rule of word formation. The actual inaccuracies within this particular area showed the subjects' difficulties with adjective formation. These contained:

- *uncomplete* instead of *incomplete*: **uncomplete life*, and
- *uncurable* instead of *incurable*: **uncurable disease*.

Although morphologically unacceptable, the adjectives formed by the respondents were comprehensible due to the stem word they were based on.

5.1.4. Spelling

Like morphology, spelling constituted the group of its own. The symptoms of fossilization were either the examples of words made up of wrong letters, the instances of too many or too few letters in a word, or the cases of word separation.

Irrespective of the type of occurrences, all of them were joined together under the heading of WRONG SPELLING.

The wrong spelling category consisted of 17 misspelled words altogether (see Appendix 8). 7 of them were built of wrong letters. For example:

- **extend* (instead of extent: **to some extend*),
- **indestructible*,
- **obsticals* (instead of obstacles), or
- **explanation*.

Were it not for the context of the situation provided in the text, the word *extend* could as well be interpreted from the perspective of the verb. Especially difficult seemed the third example for its form required much effort to decipher it.

There were 4 cases of too many letters in a word. They involved:

- **powerfull*,
- **fullfil*,
- **minuite* (instead of minute), and
- **oppinions*.

Here, the most problematic appeared example no 3. The very letter combination made it hard to associate the word with a 60 second unit.

The situations in which some letters were missing were also recorded on 4 separate occasions, and involved the following:

- **intresting*,
- **diffrent*,
- **maveric*, and
- **litte* (instead of little).

What posed problems at this particular time was the last one-word utterance. It showed how influential and consequential the letter omission is for the graphic representation and meaning of a given word.

Finally, two instances of the so called “in-word” separation were observed. These contained such utterances as:

- **I can not imagine...*, and
- **He can not say that* —

Strange and disconnected as the sentences looked, they did not lose their meaning. The negative element retained the form of negation the utterances were to take on.

5.1.5. Punctuation

Judging by their incidence, problems with punctuation appeared to be the least frequent in the whole classification of difficulties the respondents faced in writing. The type of the symptoms distinguished at this particular point was called WRONG PUNCTUATION. It consisted in the omission of an apostrophe illustrated by the following example:

- **If we make mistakes, they are ours, not the other person.*

The resultant sentence was by all means ambiguous. The intended meaning of possession encapsulated in the second part of the utterance could be interpreted from a totally different perspective. The sequence *not the other person* could as well serve as the beginning of a new thought.

5.2. The criterion of text coherence

The text samples examined for text coherence underwent the analysis of intersentential and intrasentential links, including such aspects as fillers, repetitions, reformulations, overreliance on certain structures, redundant categories, overuse of discourse markers, meaningless/unfinished utterances (see Table 5.7). As the research demonstrated, only one type of symptoms conducive to fossilization was detected, i.e. that of THE OVERUSE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS.

To this type belonged one particular expression which the respondents used in their performance as many as 194 times. What they relied on most frequently was the expression commonly used in voicing one's personal opinions, and presenting one's point of view, worded as:

- *as far as I'm concerned...*

The number speaks for itself, and it seems legitimate to say that the expression is representative of the subjects' language habits; the units of language which, as it is very often the case, no longer serve the purpose of maintaining the discourse. Habitual and mechanical in character, they are, more often than not, meaningless utterances or, put differently, the instances of the empty language.

5.3. The summary of findings

To sum up, the analysis of the written text samples collected at the time of the first measurement identified 6 types of fossilization syndromes, constituting 20 categories in toto:

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	16
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	8
	MISUSE OF PRONOUNS	7
	WRONG SENTENCE PATTERNS	4
	PROBLEMS WITH NUMBER	4
	MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS	4
	LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD	3
	MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	3
	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS	2
	OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	1
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	1
	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	1
	PROBLEMS WITH CASE	1
	OMISSION OF VERBS	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	12
	WRONG COLLOCATIONS	1
MORPHOLOGY	WRONG PREFIXES	2
SPELLING	WRONG SPELLING	17
PUNCTUATION	WRONG PUNCTUATION	1
CRITERION OF TEXT COHERENCE	USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS	194

Table 5.9 Written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 1)

As regards the criterion of language accuracy, it revealed the subjects' grammatical, lexical, morphological, spelling and punctuation-related problems indicative of fossilization. Grammar turned out to be the source of 14 different categories encompassing 4 types of language behaviours conducive to fossilization in terms of range and scope. Especially significant were the misuse and omission categories, making the resultant language ambiguous and incomplete. To the most frequently-occurring symptoms of fossilization within the criterion of accuracy belonged punctuation-specific difficulties the subjects encountered in the course of writing. The effect these problems had on discourse comprehensibility equaled that of lexical problems representative of the wrong word category. Both the subjects' spelling and choice of words were misleading and disadvantageous to the quality of their performance.

A great deal of influence on the language quality is ascribed to the subjects' overuse of fixed expressions identified owing to the criterion of text coherence. As presented below, the subjects reckoned on an automatised language form to such an extent that it, more often than not, devalued the content of the message, and disorganised the discourses per se:

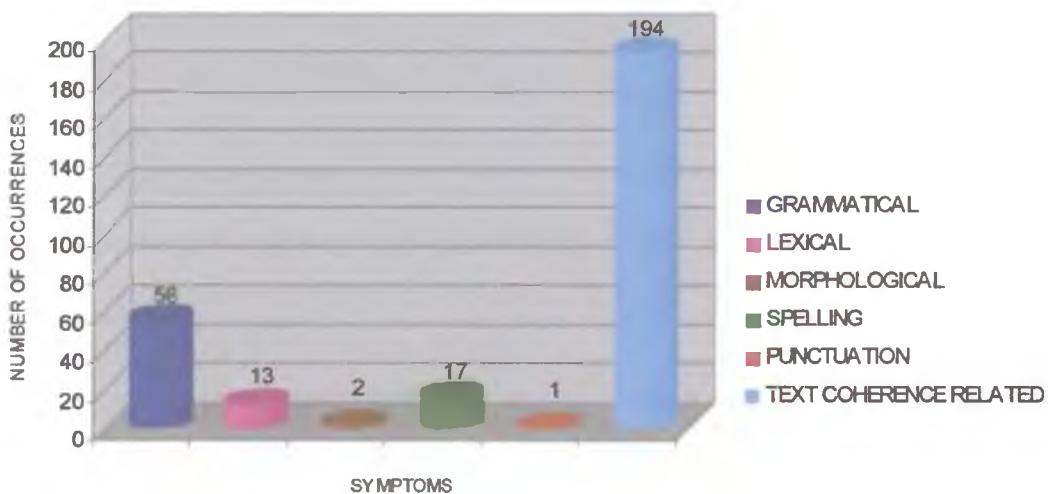


Fig. 5 4 Written symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs text coherence (measurement 1)

To conclude, the most frequently occurring language form, i.e. fixed expression, turned out to be the most disruptive language propriety regarding the syntactic and semantic discourse value.

6. Written performance – measurement 2

The data presented in the following section derives from the second measurement of the subjects’ written discourses. As it was previously the case, the findings are organised and analysed from the perspective of language accuracy and text coherence.

6.1. The criterion of accuracy

Analogously to the first measurement, the criterion of language accuracy encompassed grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling and punctuation. This is the order in which the data is presented.

6.1.1. Grammar

As far as grammar is concerned, 16 different symptoms of fossilization were identified and grouped into 16 different categories. Ordered from the most to the least frequent in appearance, the grammatical symptoms were as follows:

- 1) OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 2) LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT
- 3) WRONG SENTENCE PATTERNS
- 4) PROBLEMS WITH PRONOUNS

- 5) MISUSE OF ARTICLES
- 6) OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
- 7) WRONG PREPOSITIONS
- 8) OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
- 9) WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 10) WRONG VERB FORMS
- 11) PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL AND SINGULAR FORMS
- 12) PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS
- 13) PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON
- 14) PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE
- 15) PROBLEMS WITH CASE and
- 16) OMISSION OF VERB INFLECTIONS.

The omission of articles, which covered the situation(s) in which the respondents omitted either an indefinite or definite article, was noticed on 21 occasions altogether (see Appendix 9). To name a few, the lack of indefinite articles was observed among such utterances as:

- *...if you are healthy person...,
- *...you have big influence on children, or
- *It's common opinion that...

As is clearly seen, the subjects had problems with the use of indefinite articles both with respect to the “loose” utterances they produced (example 1 and 2) and fixed expressions they resorted to in their performance (example 3). The first two examples flouted the rule of putting indefinite articles before singular nouns preceded by adjectives. The two remaining cases, on the other hand, showed the subjects’ partial /incomplete knowledge of fixed patterns the phrases should have followed.

By contrast, the omission of definite articles was scarcely represented by the corpus of text samples collected in the research. The three examples of omission found in the subjects’ responses involved two proper names and one fixed phrase, namely:

- *Tatra Mountains,
- *Vistula, and
- *...come to conclusion...

The subjects must have forgotten the basic rules concerning the occurrence of definite articles before chains of mountains, and rivers. Also, the form of an idiomatic phrase the sample provided was incomplete and, thus, unacceptable.

Next in the classification was the lack of subject-verb agreement. This category comprised the instances of subjects' utterances in which the subject did not match the verb or the verb form did not correspond to the sentence subject, each time resulting in the "mismatched" string of the language. As many as 10 occurrences of that sort were spotted in the respondents' production (see Appendix 9). These were encapsulated in such sentences as:

- **The next things is....,*
- **Their support do not really solve the problems.*
- **Money are...*

The most eye-catching example constituted utterance no 3. The subjects seemed to be influenced by their L1 since the equivalent of a means of payment is always plural in Polish.

Wrong sentence patterns, which were given the third place in the overall classification of grammatical symptoms of fossilization, included 8 misconstructured sentences, most of which were wrongly ordered or "misordered" utterances (see Appendix 9). To quote evidence from the study, some of the inaccuracies hinted at above are exposed in the examples below:

- **It has improved also,*
- **These things have been always important,*
- **No matter the scientists have many ideas, their support is...,*
- **Do our beliefs are good?*

The first two sentences were the classic examples of the so called wrong word order in which the mid-position adverbs were given the final position in the first case, and followed the verb in the second. The last two sentences constituted the situations in which the whole constructions were ill-shaped, the former lacking the conjunction, the latter forming the wrong question.

Subsequently, the classification comprised problems with pronouns. The problems that did occur in this area were related to possessive, reflexive and personal pronouns. Out of 7 incorrect pronoun forms, 4 consisted of an inappropriate form of a possessive pronoun, or its lack:

- **Our home is different,*

- **At home you character can be shaped,*
- **Everyone has the values in our life, and*
- **People notice they ways of life.*

Taking into account a degree of miscomprehension the above-presented sentences resulted in, the biggest misunderstanding was likely to appear regarding example 2 and 3. In the case of the second one, the problem lied in the very person or thing to be shaped at home. The third example of ambiguity aroused with respect to the pronoun being attributive to the noun.

One personal pronoun was wrongly used:

- **They put themself in a bad light.*

Judging by the very example, the form of the pronoun the subject used was not disruptive at all. The sentence remained clear and understandable.

And, in final, there was one situation in which the form of a personal pronoun did not correspond with the subject of a whole sentence:

- **One's character can be shaped by all the situations and places they go through.*

This sentence was by all means misleading. It lacked a precise reference to its subject, and, thus, caused difficulties when reading it.

What followed were the category of the misuse of articles in ex equo with the omission of prepositions. Each of them scored 6 occurrences (see Appendix 9). The former covered the situations of a wrong article used, i.e. a definite article placed where it was irrelevant, where an indefinite article was required, or the other way round. The misuse of a definite article was spotted on one single occasion. The case in point was the following:

- **The problem of the one's life is ...*

The utterance violated the rule of the zero article before indefinite pronouns.

The examples of misplaced indefinite articles, however, were much more prolific, and involved both two-word utterances as well as longer sequences, such as:

- **a willingness,*
- **a time,*
- **a success,*
- **come to a conclusion, and*
- **Nobody can find a smugness.*

The term “misplaced” was used here to refer to the situation(s) in which indefinite articles were placed, and their presence was irrelevant.

As the results showed, many a time an indefinite article was followed by an uncountable noun – the situation grammatically unacceptable in the target language. Only in one case it was the fixed expression that was inappropriately composed of *a* article instead of a definite *the*.

The latter, notably the category of the omission of prepositions, was represented by the respondents’ incomplete language production, that is the utterances lacking prepositions. To give a few examples, the subjects formed the following sentences:

- **The way these beliefs work is dependable on the rules that are imposed by the society.*
- **The most important things in our life have nothing to do with the place we are, or*
- **The best is ahead us.*

As the analysis of the above-stated sentences revealed, the first example lacked the *on* preposition, the second was devoid of *in*, whereas in the third one *if* was missing. The omissions are characteristic of the Polish language. Viewed from this perspective, the sentences are nothing but language calques.

Apart from the cases of the lack of preposition(s) hinted at above, there were 5 situations in total in which wrong prepositions were used. The exact examples of the incorrect language forms produced by the sample involved:

- **a viewpoint about* (instead of a viewpoint on),
- **in a large degree* (instead of to a large degree),
- **insensitive for* (instead of insensitive to),
- **chance for* (instead of chance of), **People’ll have greater chances for success,*
- **answer for* (instead of answer to), **the answer for the questions.*

The Polish influences are present here as well. The combinations the subjects produced derived from L1 patterns, and constituted literary translations of their Polish equivalents, especially example 2 and 4.

Not only did the informants in question make a wrong choice of prepositions, but they also overused the prepositions time and again. The overuse of prepositions covered the situation(s) which normally did not require the preposition to be used. Against all restrictions placed on the use of prepositions in English, the subjects

produced 5 utterances into which they inserted 5 too many prepositions altogether. They were as follows:

- **We don't trust in our own capabilities,*
- **People are busy in earning money,*
- **They betray for them,*
- **He's not worth of it,*
- **I spend a lot of time on learning.*

In approaching the reasons for the status quo, the already mentioned L1 interference must be reconsidered. It is particularly evident in sentences no 1, 4 and 5.

Also 5 occurrences scored the category of wrong verb patterns which, as the name suggests, was made up of the ways the verbs patterned in the face of their closest surroundings. This involved, for instance, the cases of *to-infinitive* forms used instead of *gerunds* or *infinitives without to*, or *that-clause* patterns instead of *-ing* verb forms:

- **...inclination to gathering knowledge...,*
- **...teach him being tolerant,*
- **...how to overcome difficulties that will to appear later,*
- **We spend a lot of time to look for something,*
- **We congratulate that other people have more adventurous lives.*

The results demonstrated the respondents' problems with TL verbs, and did not know the restrictions regulating the form and structure of verbs in a sentence.

Next to it, with 4 occurrences, were placed wrong verb forms. These encompassed incorrect *past* and *past participle* forms, or the use of *past tense* forms where the *present* ones were the TL norm, and the other way round. The exact examples of the inappropriate verb forms produced by the sample were found in the following sentences:

- **It can only helped us,*
- **We can lost it very quickly,*
- **Values are showed,*
- **Nowadays people do a lot of things and spent a lot of money.*

The first two examples appeared to be ambiguous because of the forms of the verbs they were built of. The first referred to the present, the other to the past time experiences. The problem would not be solved without the context and information which clarified the subjects' intentions in each case.

Problems with plural and singular forms, which appeared in ex equo with the aforementioned wrong verb forms, comprised either ill-formed noun plurals, or plurals made up of uncountable nouns. As for the former, there was only one example of the wrongly-formed plural which involved:

- *lifes* (instead of *lives*), **Another machine that will make our lifes easier.*

The only problem lied in the wrong letter used to form plurality. The sentence it was inserted into was correct as regards its remaining constituent parts.

However, when it comes to the “uncountable plurality”, three examples of the so called “pluralised uncountable nouns” appeared:

- **travels,*
- **wealths,* and
- **moneys: *People don't earn a lot of moneys.*

Although the plural form of *money* does exist and takes on the above-quoted form, the context it appeared in did not allow for the sense it was used in.

At the level of 3 occurrences appeared problems with direct/indirect questions. They reflected the subjects' difficulties with question formation, be it a direct or an indirect one. The question the respondents attempted at asking directly occurred once only, and took on the following form:

- **Do you can find out it?*

The resultant structure revealed the subjects' inability to construct direct questions with modal verbs. What the respondents arrived at resembled a direct question in the initial part of the sentence, followed by a modal and phrasal verb accordingly.

The indirect questions, on the other hand, turned out to be ill-formed two times. As illustrated with the examples below, the interrogative sentences were constructed as follows:

- **Don't you think we should find out what does she do,*
- **Do you know how has the world changed.*

The questions, though different from their intended form, retained the original meaning. Actually, the structure the subjects used when constructing the above-enumerated could be treated as the language calque. The very examples reflected the exact patterns of indirect question formation in the Polish language.

Slightly narrower in scope (two occurrences) were the subsequent two categories, namely problems with comparison and problems with passive. Problems with comparison were reduced to the subjects' difficulties with using the appropriate

conjunction. The examples deriving from the study showed the respondents' tendency to replace *than* conjunction with an adverb *then* or relative pronoun *that*:

- **Health is much more important then money,*
- **It's much more important that money.*

Both sentences were ambiguous, and could be understood in two different ways. In the first one, *then* took on the meaning of *after*, or *at that time*. In the second one, *that* could be treated as a part of an *impersonal it* structure.

Problems with passive, on the other hand, mirrored the respondent's inability to produce a correct structure. The incorrect passivised constructions lacked the past participle form of the verb in both cases:

- **The world is govern by money, and*
- **Your character can be strengthen.*

Despite the fact that an *ed* verb inflection was left out on each occasion, the sentences were not difficult to understand.

Last but not least were the remaining two categories of the symptoms indicative of fossilization, i.e. case problems and omission of verb inflections, each represented by one single example. Accordingly, the problem with case consisted in the wrong form of the genitive. Simply, the case mark was misplaced, making the following form grammatically unacceptable:

- **somebody's else opinion.*

As it was the case above, the very language form, although incorrect in terms of grammar, was not incomprehensible.

Omission of verb inflections, on the other hand, was reduced to the omission of 3rd person singular, and was particularly visible in the example which follows:

- **He think...*

It was sufficient to see that the allegedly basic language rules were the source of recurring problems the subjects experienced.

6.1.2. Lexis

The lexical analysis, which invariably covered lexemes, both one-word items and complex units as well as rules of combining vocabulary, gave rise to 4 groups of the so called "lexical symptoms of fossilization". The order of data presentation and discussion is based on the frequency of occurrence of a given type of symptom, and divided into the following categories symptomatic of fossilization:

1) WRONG WORDS

- 2) WRONG COLLOCATIONS
- 3) WRONG PHRASAL VERBS
- 4) NON-EXISTENT WORDS/PHRASES.

As illustrated above, the wrong word category was the most “popular” of all. As many as 17 cases of the wrong word usage were recorded (see Appendix 9). “Wrong words” covered those lexical items which did not fit the context of a sentence, completely changed the meaning of a sentence, and/or the intentions of the writer. To name a few, the list of wrong words comprised:

- *realise* instead of *make somebody aware of*: **Teachers can teach them tolerance and realise them things that destroy this world,*
- *every day* instead of *everyday*: **Some every day chores are impossible,*
- *badly* instead of *bad*: **We feel badly when we are ill,*
- *Loose* instead of *lose*: **It's only after loosing something that we start to appreciate it.*

Judging by the very examples, each of the resultant sentences was confusing and misleading. The first one consisted of the word *realise* probably because of its L1 literal equivalent. The second seems to be the effect of subjects' inattention to detail, differentiating the adjective from a *determiner + noun* combination. The third case violated the rule of adjectives, not verbs, following the so called verbs of senses. The fourth one, finally, was likely to derive from the subjects' lack of knowledge, and/or their inability to discriminate between homonyms.

Each of the subsequent categories was given the same score (1 single occurrence of an inappropriate word per category). The suggestion is that they carry equal weight in the whole body of evidence. The first of them, notably the wrong collocation category was made up of a wrong combination of words within the *adjective + noun* collocation type. More precisely, it involved the following pair of words:

- **material rules*.

Forming such a word combination, the sample went beyond the semantic field the adjective *material* was given.

As regards the phrasal verbs, the inaccuracy observed in the empirical data did not take on the form considered non-existent in the TL, but it was, in fact, composed of one single element which did not match the sequence of words, and,

consequently, did not fit the context. To be more specific, the case in point involved the expression as follows:

- **fall in with an illness.*

Used in such a way, the expression referred to the very fact of meeting or agreeing to an illness, which was not the point here.

The occurrence of a non-existent word was even more “eye-catching” as it consisted in the lexeme untypical of the English language, i.e.:

- **compan.*

Judging by the lexeme itself, it is immediately apparent that the word itself was a language calque. It means in Polish exactly what the English word *companion* renders, i.e. a person or an animal that goes with or spends much time with another

6.1.3. Morphology

Within morphology, two “morphological symptoms” of fossilization were identified. These constituted:

- 1) WRONG SUFFIXES and
- 2) WRONG PREFIXES.

The wrong suffix category, as the name indicates, comprised all the instances of words whose endings were ill-formed, ill-shaped or, generally speaking, did not comply with the very rules of word formation. To this type referred 2 examples:

- **jealousity* (instead of *jealousy*), and
- **pursue* (instead of *pursuit*).

The opposite situation, namely the case of wrong prefixes, evident in the wrong beginning of a word, was observed on one single occasion:

- **uncurable* (instead of *incurable*).

Neither suffix nor prefix-related inaccuracies were serious enough to hinder comprehension. The meaning was recognizable due to the word stems that constituted given lexemes.

6.1.4. Spelling

Spelling, “taking charge” of the correct order of the correct letters in a word, was violated 26 times in total (see Appendix 9). The situations in which the word spelling was far from norm gave rise to 1 broad category under the same heading. It encompassed the cases of wrong letters, too many or too few letters in a word, as well as the so called “in-word” separation, and wrongly-ordered letters.

To start with the wrong letter category, it consisted of 9 occurrences of those words which were built of inappropriate letters, such as:

- **existence*,
- **edvance*,
- **edvertise*,
- **manking* (instead of mankind).

Strange as these words seemed, they did not bring about any disruptions to the content of the whole discourse produced by the sample.

Aside from the above, 8 words turned out to be composed of irrelevant letters, each taking on the unacceptable form. Some of the inaccuracies were reflected in the following words:

- **possibillity*,
- **luxsury*,
- **committ*,
- **saloon* (instead of salon) : **beauty saloon*.

The utterance no 4 illustrates the consequences an extra letter in a word could have. The very expression the sample created was misleading because of its second referring to a bar or car rather than a room for beauty treatment as intended.

By contrast, there were 7 instances of letter omission. In consequence, the words created were shortened and incomplete. To this type belonged, for example:

- **tenagers*,
- **posess*,
- **intelektual*, or
- **disapointed*.

None of the above-presented utterances resulted in consequences similar to those previously discussed.

Definitely, less representative were the last two cases involving the examples of word separation and wrongly ordered letters. The in-word separation was represented by the following:

- **our selves*.

The utterance is by no means incorrect, however, it renders a completely different meaning when separated and not separated. The former denotes a person's inner being, nature or personality. The latter, however, constitutes the 3rd person plural reflexive pronoun.

The same is true of wrongly ordered letters. They do not only change the semantic value of the word, but may also bring about the production of non-existent words, such as:

- **surley* (instead of *surely*).

As easily noticed, the word in question could be ambiguous, interpreted from the perspective of an adverb meaning *without doubt certainly* on the one hand, or an adjective understood as *bad-tempered* and *rude* on the other hand.

6.1.5. Punctuation

As regards punctuation, 3 cases symptomatic of fossilization were found. They all were joined together to form 1 group of symptoms referred to as LACK OF APOSTROPHES.

As was previously the case, this category realised itself in the lack of stress marks, which, as illustrated with the examples below, deprived the utterances of their intended meaning:

- **in todays world*,
- **in few years time*, or
- **in fifty years time*.

Were it not for the context, the utterances would pose problems for their potential readers. The omission of apostrophes in mid-sentence positions allowed for different interpretations, one of which could be just the number of years, not the future reference.

6.2. The criterion of text coherence

Again, the criterion of text coherence was aimed to identify the situations in which the language produced by the sample was disconnected, fragmented or, put it differently, lacked the so called intersentential and intrasentential links, due to fillers, repetitions, reformulations, overuse of discourse markers, unfinished words/phrases, overreliance on certain structures, and/or meaningless expressions.

On close examination, the texts produced by the subjects appeared to be abundant in fixed expressions deteriorating the quality of the overall language performance. Notoriously used by the informants, the very expressions were the so called conversational routines constituting two-word or multi-word utterances, such as:

- *I think*,
- *As far as something is concerned*,

- *It is often the case that,*
- *It is true that.*

Following the results, “I think” was most frequently overused (311 times in total). Slightly less “popular” among the subjects was the expression *As far as something is concerned*, with a score of 201 occurrences. The third place was given to *It is often the case that* which the subjects referred to 97 times. Last but not least, the respondents made use of 90 expressions in the shape of not unlike *It is true that*, giving it the fourth place in the classification of the overused fixed expressions.

Irrespective of the type of the expression overused, the whole body of evidence shows a large extent to which the subjects’ language is mechanical and habitual. It relies on bad habits, leaving almost no room for subjects’ creativity and mastery of their language skill.

6.3. The summary of findings

On the whole, the second measurement gave rise to 25 categories of the so called written symptoms indicative of fossilization. They were divided into 6 different types, i.e. grammatical, lexical, morphological, spelling, punctuation and text coherence-related fossilization syndromes:

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	21
	LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT	10
	WRONG SENTENCE PATTERNS	8
	PROBLEMS WITH PRONOUNS	7
	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	6
	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS	6
	WRONG PREPOSITIONS	5
	OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS	5
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	5
	WRONG VERB FORMS	4
	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL & SINGULAR FORMS	4
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	3
	PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON	2
	PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE	2
	PROBLEMS WITH CASE	1
	OMISSION OF VERB INFLECTIONS	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	17
	WRONG COLLOCATIONS	1
	WRONG PHRASAL VERBS	1
	NON-EXISTENT WORDS/ PHRASES	1
MORPHOLOGY	WRONG SUFFIXES	2
	WRONG PREFIXES	1
SPELLING	WRONG SPELLING	26
PUNCTUATION	LACK OF APOSTROPHES	3
CRITERION OF TEXT COHERENCE	USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS	699

Table 5.10. Written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 2)

The criterion of accuracy, as is readily seen, operated on grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling and punctuation, the first one being the widest in scope. Especially detrimental to the form and content of the language produced appeared preposition-related inaccuracies, wrong verb forms, as well as problems with plural and singular forms. The remaining four categories were less diversified but not insignificant. As regards lexis, the category of wrong words comprised the instances of ambiguous language forms. Similar in character were the examples of wrong spelling (within the scope of spelling) and the category of the lack of apostrophes representative of the subjects’ punctuation problems (Figure 5.5):

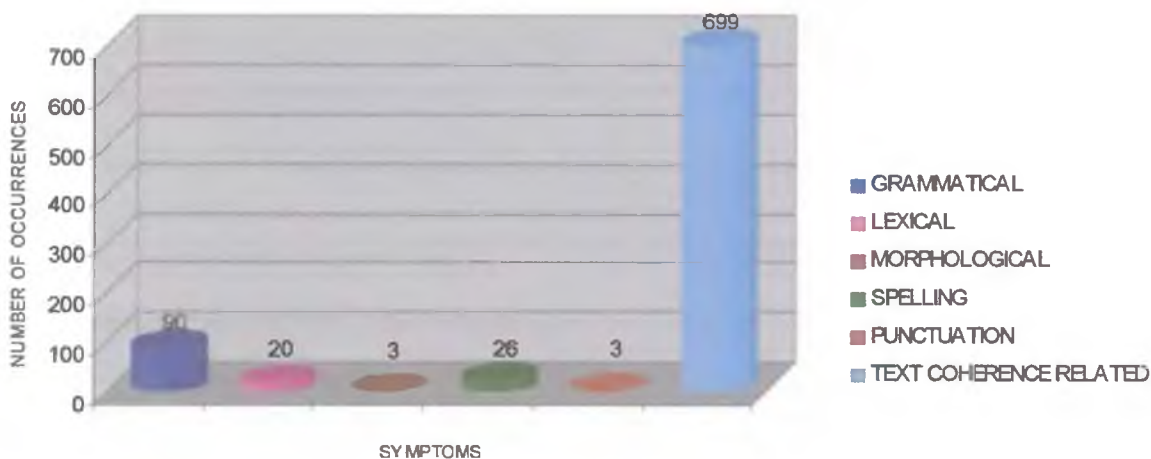


Fig. 5 5 Written symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs text coherence (measurement 2)

Deriving from the figures, the instances of the inaccurate language were outweighed by the scope of language incoherence. The number of fixed expressions the subjects used brought about a high degree of inter and intra-discourse fragmentarity, giving the impression of language automatization and meaninglessness.

7. Written performance - measurement 3

The third measurement followed the exact procedures of measurement 1 and measurement 2, and the same criteria were applied.

7.1. The criterion of accuracy

As it was the case with the first and second measurement, accuracy was coterminous with language exactness and correctness, excluding language mistakes be it grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling or punctuation-oriented inaccuracies.

7.1.1. Grammar

As regards grammatical accuracy, the research demonstrated that it was violated on numerous occasions. All grammatical inaccuracies were divided into 23 categories corresponding to 23 different symptoms of fossilization. Starting from the most frequently occurring grammatical signs of fossilization, the classification comprised the following:

- 1) OMISSION OF ARTICLES
- 2) PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL AND SINGULAR FORMS
- 3) WRONG PREPOSITIONS
- 4) MISUSE OF ARTICLES
- 5) WRONG WORD ORDER
- 6) MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 7) MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
- 8) MISUSE OF OTHER/ANOTHER
- 9) PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS
- 10) WRONG VERB PATTERNS
- 11) PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS
- 12) PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE
- 13) LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD
- 14) PROBLEMS WITH SO & SUCH
- 15) WRONG PRONOUNS
- 16) WRONG VERB FORMS
- 17) WRONG VERBS
- 18) WRONG QUANTIFIERS
- 19) PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON
- 20) OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
- 21) OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
- 22) PROBLEMS WITH CASE
- 23) PROBLEMS WITH MUST & HAVE TO

As far as the omission of articles is concerned, as many as 40 occurrences of that type were recorded (see Appendix 10). The data collected at this point involved the cases pertaining to the lack of both indefinite and definite articles, the proportion of the former to the latter being 13 to 27 occurrences. To quote the evidence from the

study, the instances of the indefinite article omission comprised the situations and/or things unspecified, that is “of any kind”, such as:

- **We had chance to do it,*
- **It was in cosy place,*
- **Chicago is multicultural city,*
- **...very popular building.*

The difficulties the subjects displayed here can be accounted for L1-L2 discrepancies; the former lacking articles as such, the latter being based on them.

The examples of utterances lacking definite articles, on the other hand, oscillated mainly around proper nouns, giving rise to the following:

- **In USA,*
- **Liffey River,*
- **In European Union, or*
- **Middle Ages.*

This time, the sample did not follow the rule of placing definite articles before the name of the United States of America, rivers, organizations or literary periods.

The remaining cases were related to quantifiers, numbers, and/or common nouns like, for example:

- **great number of museums,*
- **buildings from 13th century,*
- **We have very ambitious task.*

The utterances presented above were a sure sign of subjects' ignorance of rules stipulating the use of an indefinite article before quantifiers, as well as definite articles to be inserted before cardinal numbers.

Second on the list of the grammatical symptoms of fossilization appeared problems with plural and singular forms. This category comprised 10 occurrences altogether, reflected in either the use of *singular* instead of *plural noun forms*, *plural* instead of *singular forms*, or the so called *wrong plurals* (plurals ill-formed or ill-shaped). As regards the cases with a singular noun, these occurred in the following sentences:

- **Cracow is one of the oldest Polish city,*
- **There are thousand of different kind of pubs, discos and clubs.*

The first example displayed the subjects' problems with forming plurality of nouns following the superlative form of the adjective. The second, on the other hand,

pointed to a hardship the cardinal numbers in particular and quantifiers appeared to be for the subjects under investigation.

The wrongly used plurals, on the other hand, were observed in such utterances:

- **many a times,*
- **in two weeks times,*
- **The door are...,*
- **crowds,* and
- **successes: *I want to achieve successes.*

As regards the consequences these language forms had on the discourse itself, the last example seemed highly ambiguous. The context it was spotted in did not allow for the plural form denoting the achievement of desired results, but a singular form referring to something that achieves positive results.

Finally, the examples of ill-formed noun pluralities involved:

- **cafe's,* and
- **museas.*

The first example testified to subjects' difficulties with the graphic representation of plural *s* inflections presented in such a way that the word referred to the place rather than the number of the above-mentioned. The second case, on the other hand, gave evidence of the subjects' inability to discriminate between particular rules of forming plural forms.

The third place was given to wrong prepositions (8 of them altogether). To this category referred all the cases of nouns or verbs followed or preceded by wrong prepositions. The resultant word combinations were far from the rules of word combinability and, thus, more often than not, grammatically unacceptable. These involved among other things:

- ** was on the meeting,*
- **omplain for,* or
- **for holiday.*

The utterances the group in question produced at this point operated on prepositions which were unacceptable in English, but totally correct in Polish. Thus, the source of inaccuracies is ascribed to L1 interference responsible for the above-cited language calques.

What followed was the misuse of articles observed on 7 different occasions. The examples of language inaccuracies covered both definite and indefinite articles,

irrelevant in a given context or simply inappropriately used. The “irrelevant articles” were those which the subjects unnecessarily inserted into their written discourses. For example:

- **In a consequence,*
- **A half a year ago,*
- **A certain changes,* or
- **The Kościuszko Mountain.*

The first example revealed the subjects’ unfamiliarity with the form of the very fixed expression, whereas the remaining three cases showed the subjects’ ignorance of rules excluding indefinite articles from the situations denoting a period of 30 minutes or 6 months (example no 2), plurality (utterance no 3), and the name of a single mountain (utterance no 4).

Those articles considered to be inappropriate, on the other hand, appeared in the situations in which, for example, a definite article was wrongly substituted with an indefinite one, or the wrong form of an indefinite article was used. The former can be illustrated with the following example:

- *without *the* doubt.

Accordingly, the latter case was represented by the the following:

- **an* unique.

The former example is, again, the result of the subjects’ lack of knowledge of fixed phrases, the latter, however, can be accounted for violation of rules requiring the use of *an* indefinite article before words beginning with a vowel or mute *h* exclusively.

The subsequent category, namely that of the wrong word order, scored 5 occurrences, each being the example of wrongly ordered, or, in other words, misplaced constituents within a given sentence. To list a few, the instances of the wrong word order were found in the sentences as follows:

- **We had also a chance to go there,*
- **There would be still many books in shops,*
- **The history of the nation should be always perceived...*

Judging by the above-listed inaccuracies, it can be admitted with no reservations that it was the subjects’ L1 that influenced the structure of the utterances, especially evident in the case of the adverb misplacement.

Slightly less “common” were the cases in which relative pronouns and prepositions were misused. Both scored 4 occurrences. The former encompassed the

situations in which the wrong pronoun was used, the cases of nominative pronoun forms where the genitive ones were required, or a relative *what* mistakenly replaced by *which*:

- **I don't know to whom it belongs to,*
- **Garden which paths lead to...,*
- **...other exotic trees which species are unknown...,*
- **This is the film what I like.*

L1 influences are also visible here, the use of *which* in sentences no 2 and 3 mirrors the Polish rules of using relative pronouns. Sentences no 1 and 4 are the result of L1-L2 discrepancies, the former lacking the relative pronoun – preposition separation, the latter having no equivalents for the English *which* – *what* distinction, bringing about confusion in each case.

As regards “misused prepositions”, the subjects’ performance contained the prepositions which either did not fit the context or were misplaced, and, thus, occupied the positions in which they are considered irrelevant. For example:

- **concerned with* (instead of *concerned about*), or
- **attend to* (instead of *attend*): **I used to attend to this school.*

The first case was likely to derive from the subjects’ inability to distinguish between the differences in meaning each of the expressions was marked by. The second example, on the other hand, followed the L1 *verb + preposition* pattern, being equally ambiguous in effect.

Next in the frequency of occurrence were the categories of the misuse of *other* and *another*, and problems with direct/indirect questions. Each of the above-mentioned categories was represented by 3 grammatical inaccuracies. The misuse of *other* and *another* consisted in substitutions of determiners, i.e. *other* replaced with *another*, or *others* used instead of *other*. The exact examples were as follows:

- **...another monuments,*
- **...to know others cultures, and*
- **...and many others actions.*

The utterances the sample produced did not comply with the restrictions on the occurrence of determiners/pronouns in focus, i.e. *another* used with singular nouns, and *others* performing no attributive function whatsoever.

Problems with direct/indirect questions, on the other hand, involved 3 utterances of ill-formed indirect questions. As a matter of fact, the questions the respondents

produced resembled direct questions, such as:

- **I don't know when and for how long have you come to the party,*
- **We have some free time to feel how is it like to go down the street in the area, and*
- **We have some free time to see how are you doing here.*

The constructions definitely changed the subjects' intended meaning in that that they required a "yes" or "no" answer, which the subjects did not aim at.

Similar to the above was the category of wrong verb patterns. The sentences produced by the subjects were incorrectly patterned. This entailed, for example, the use of *bare infinitives* where *gerunds* were required, *verb inflections* where they were unacceptable, or *verb + preposition* combinations where they were grammatically incorrect:

- **look forward to come here,*
- **look forwards to..., or*
- **...spend time on sightseeing .*

As the first two utterances were the classic examples of the subjects' problems with *to-infinitive* and *gerundial* verb patterns, the third case showed the subjects' reliance on L1 patterns, being a literary translation of the Polish expression in the sense of devoting one's time to something. In English, however, the verb *spend* is used with the preposition *on* only when giving money for something.

Subsequently, the classification grouped 5 different types of grammatical symptoms of fossilization, the appearance of which amounted to two language occurrences. Under this classification were problems with conditionals, problems with passive, lack of subject-verb concord, problems with *so & such*, as well as the use of wrong pronouns.

To be more specific, problems with conditionals, basing on the data collected, were reflected in subjects' difficulties with Type I and Type II constructions. Simply, the subjects mixed these types of conditionals, creating the following utterances:

- **If you will try to use Dutch, you would be deeply impressed.*
- **I hope the restaurant would even be more popular if you will follow my advice.*

The lack of precise time reference made the sentences disconnected, and, consequently, resulted in miscomprehension on the part of their addressees.

Similarly, the subjects' problems with passive voice were rooted in the form and structure difficulty. As presented below, the most problematic turned out the verb forms:

- **People are gather around the church, and*
- **...atmosphere that cannot be find anywhere else.*

Judging by the very examples, the subjects had problems with changes the verbs required, and left them untouched, making, at the same time, the sentences extremely ambiguous. Sentence no 1, for instance, could be related to either the process of people gathering around the church, or the effect of it per se.

Structure-related problems were also evident in the situations which lacked the subject-verb agreement. The difficulties the subjects encountered at this particular point were caused by 3rd person singular verb inflections, the lack of them where necessary, or their insertion where not accepted:

- **Amsterdam seem,*
- **You can admire the isles which creates...*

Regarding the consequences of these utterances, the syntactic forms were violated, but their semantic value was retained.

Accordingly, the structural inaccuracies the subjects produced with respect to *so* and *such* involved the occasions on which *such* was replaced by *so*, such as in the following sentences:

- **I was very little among so enormous constructions, and*
- **I live in so beautiful city.*

These showed the subjects' inability to discriminate between the differences the words *so* and *such* were marked by in English as opposed to Polish. The wrong structures, though, did not hinder comprehension of what was intended to be conveyed by the sample.

Last but, of course, not least in this group of symptoms indicative of fossilization were wrong pronouns. The sample seemed to have difficulties with reciprocal, possessive and personal pronouns respectively:

- **A large group of lakes connected with each other,*
- **Its not my surrounding.*

Again, L1-L2 differences appeared to be responsible for the subjects' erroneous language production. The problems the sample encountered with respect to reciprocal pronouns were likely to arise from the lack of their corresponding forms in

the Polish language. Problems with the graphic representation of it + 3rd person singular form of the verb, on the other hand, are believed to result from the homonymic similarity between the very pattern and the possessive pronoun form.

The remaining 8 categories covered single occurrences of the item/structure misuse, omission and difficulty. As regards the language misuse, the evidence collected from the study testified to one example of the wrong verb used. The subject's choice of verb seemed to be influenced by his/her L1, and the following structure exemplifies what is commonly referred to as the negative transfer:

- **This church has hundred years.*

Judging by the very example, there is no denying the fact that the Polish equivalent of the verb *have* was to be blame for the resultant sentence.

Similar to the above is the example of the sentence made up of the wrong form of the verb violating the structure of the past tense:

- **I couldn't also missed...*

This time, the subjects seemed to transfer the Polish rules of the past tense formation into their English performance, producing the utterance unacceptable in the TL.

The group of language misuse is closed by the category of the wrong use of the noun quantifier, and wrong comparison of adjectives. The former was realised in the situation in which the quantifier chosen by the subjects did not match the countable noun, and the combination made reflected the use of the countable noun quantifier with the uncountable noun:

- **...great deal of local music bands.*

The very example testified to subjects' ignorance of rules regulating the quantifier-noun usage.

The latter, as the name suggests, consisted in the wrong comparative form of the following adjective:

- **...much more quiet.*

Here, the form of the adjective did not conform to the comparison rules requiring the addition of the - *er* suffix to one-syllable items.

As far as the item/structure omission is concerned, one example lacking the preposition, and one case in which the relative pronoun was missing were observed. More specifically, the former sentence was incomplete because it was devoid of the *to* preposition:

- **It was by far the most eclectic place I have ever been.*

Despite its incompleteness, the utterance did not lose its semantic value, and the intended meaning was conveyed.

In the latter case, to quote the evidence from the study, the *who* pronoun was left out:

- **There are lots of tourists enjoy feeding them.*

The meaning of this sentence was not that clear-cut. It could be interpreted in two ways; the first one referring to the number of tourists, the other constituting an imperative wishing somebody a good fun when feeding the travellers.

As for the difficulties the TL posed for the subjects in question, it was the so called “case problems” and the distinction between *must* & *have to* the data testified to. The case problem was evident in the following utterance, in which the nominative instead of the genitive case was formed:

- **Juliet house.*

The utterance did not only take on the form typical of the so called “basic English”, but it also lost its originally intended meaning of possession. The sense its form resulted in pointed to Jane and a house as such.

Problems with *must* and *have to*, on the other hand, can be accounted for L1-L2 discrepancies. There is no distinction between *have to* as obligation or necessity, and *must* as one’s internal willingness to do something in Polish. The distinction does exist in English, and the rule says that *must* reflects the speaker’s authority; something he/she feels strongly about, or expresses invitation, whereas *have to* relates to external authority. The following sentence was likely to result from the subject’s lack of knowledge about the above-quoted distinction:

- **It is a city you have to visit.*

Were it not for the context indicating the speaker’s authority, the sentence would not be considered incorrect.

7.1.2. Lexis

Lexical inaccuracies, as the results show, gave rise to 3 groups of the so called “lexical symptoms of fossilization”. Taking into consideration the frequency of occurrence, the subjects’ linguistic behaviours symptomatic of fossilization were arranged in the following way:

- 1) WRONG WORDS
- 2) WRONG COLLOCATIONS
- 3) NON-EXISTENT WORDS/PHRASES.

Most commonly, the subjects' discourses contained wrong words (23 occurrences altogether). This involved the use of words that did not fit the context and brought about the change of meaning of the produced utterances (11 in total), the use of the wrong word category (7 examples), and wrong words within the same category (5 altogether). The cases of the meaning alteration were represented by, for instance:

- *concerned* instead of *concentrated*: **Places concerned in a rather small space, or*
- *full* instead of *feel*: **I feel this excitement.*

The first sentence gave the impression of places important in a rather small place, whereas the other referred to the very action of moving down or lowering the feeling of excitement, which was not true to the text.

The latter, to be more exact, was manifested via the situations in which the noun instead of the verb was used, or the other way round. For example:

- *life* instead of *live*: **Features which help us to life a tranquil and happy life.*
- *think* instead of *thing*: **The think is ...*

These utterances were equally ambiguous. The former could be interpreted as the features useful for life as such, or a tranquil and happy life.

And, finally, the inaccuracies resulting from the use of the wrong word within the same category were recorded in the following sentences:

- *politics* instead of *politicians*: **Businessmen and politics dressed in their Sunday best,*
- *south* instead of *southern*: **In the south part of Poland.*

What was unclear here was the first sentence, the meaning of which was considered ridiculous. The wrong choice of the nouns was the source of absurdity encapsulated in the opinions or activities of the government wearing clothes.

Wrong collocations appeared on 4 separate occasions and, thus, were given the second place in the "lexical classification". The word combinations the subjects misproduced were of different types; three followed the *adjective* - *noun* pattern, and one was the example of the *verb* - *noun* combination. To quote the evidence from the study, the former was represented by the following examples:

- **petty town,*
- **bold dresses, or*
- **decided meeting.*

The utterances were not as ambiguous as they were ridiculous in effect. The meaning of the collocations could be understood since it derived from their particular constituents. The word combinations, however, were unacceptable because they were composed of the elements considered mutually exclusive.

The latter case consisted in the following collocation:

- **make photos*.

Comprehensible as this collocation was, its form pointed to the subjects' L1 influence. In Polish, there are no equivalents for the English *make*, *do* or *take* in the sense of produce or create.

Not only did the subjects produce wrong words and collocations, but they also created utterances classified as inexistent in the TL. There were two examples of that type, and they were as follows:

- **foot fingers* instead of toes, and
- **nett* (instead of nice).

Both cases showed the subjects' problems with finding the right word; the first one being an English word forming a non-existent expression, the other constituting a German adjective rendering the intended meaning.

7.1.3. Morphology

The morphological analysis of the sampled texts, as was previously the case, brought about 2 categories indicative of erroneous fossilization. The language inaccuracies the sample produced at this level were two-dimensional, and covered:

- 1) WRONG PREFIXES and
- 2) WRONG SUFFIXES.

Following the results from the study, each of the categories was represented by one single occurrence of an ill-shaped word. The subject's problem with prefixes appeared at the very beginning of the following lexical item:

- **unappropriate* (instead of inappropriate).

Based on the appropriate word stem, the negative meaning of the adjective was certainly maintained.

The reverse situation, namely the subject's difficulty with suffixes was displayed at the end of the following word:

- **profanum* (instead of profane).

The resultant language form was not that easy to decipher, yet not impossible. The suggestion is that the form of the suffix used may derive from L1 interference as the

word produced by the subject reflects the lexeme used in Polish with reference to something not connected with religion or spiritual matters.

7.1.4. Spelling

The data analysis conducted from the perspective of the correct spelling pointed to 34 instances of language abuse. This broad category was further divided according to the type of the inaccuracies observed in a given word. The “misspelled” cases were relatively evenly distributed, ranging from 7 to 9 occurrences.

The situation in which there were too many letters in a word was identified on 9 occasions. It consisted of the words composed of irrelevant letters, such as:

- **watchfull*,
- **occurred*,
- **supprised*, or
- **amayzing*.

In most cases quoted above, the sample doubled the letters which normally remain single, or inserted the letters which should not be the part of the word at all, making the forms created strange-looking, but easy to understand.

Similar effects had the instances of letter omission (8 in total). The items produced in this way involved among others:

- **gorgous* (instead of gorgeous),
- **aditionally* (instead of additionally), or
- **recomend* (instead of recommend).

Incomplete as these lexical items were, they retained their semantic value.

The term “wrong letters” was used to refer to 8 words within which the inappropriate letters were placed mainly due to letter substitutions, or the cases in which the constituent letters were given the wrong position. To name a few examples, the letter substitutions are illustrated below:

- **sculphures* (instead of sculptures),
- **explenation* (instead of explanation), or
- **simultoniously* (instead of simultaneously).

As was previously the case, the resultant forms did not deviate to a large extent from TL norms, and did not bring about any problems with understanding.

As regards the wrong letter positions, the following examples were recorded:

- **regural* (instead of regular), and
- **rulal* (instead of rural).

The two adjectives could be slightly confusing at first sight as their graphic representation was far from normal.

Finally, the small letter sub-category covered 7 words which were not capitalised. To this type referred, for example:

- **silesian,*
- **asian, or*
- **japanese.*

Although devoid of capitalised letters, the words did not lose their meaning.

7.1.5. Punctuation

Punctuation-related inaccuracies turned out to be one of the least common in the whole classification of language difficulties the subjects faced in their written performance. The problems identified at this level were divided into two categories:

- 1) WRONGLY USED APOSTROPHES and
- 2) LACK OF APOSTROPHES.

Those wrongly used apostrophes covered two situations altogether, one in which the subjects used the very punctuation mark to form the noun plurality, the other while creating the genitive form of the personal pronoun. The results were mirrored in the following utterances:

- **cafe 's, and*
- **its '.*

Both cases gave rise to the language forms non-existent in English. Were it not for the context, it would not be clear what the subjects referred to, either more than one cafe in the first case, or possession in the second.

Accordingly, the omission of apostrophes involved three cases of utterances in which the lack of apostrophes did not render the subjects' intended meaning, leaving the expressions incomplete and ambiguous. For example:

- **Juliet house,*
- **In two weeks time, or*
- **In two months time.*

The first example, as was previously discussed in relation to the “case problems”, did not put an emphasis on the fact that Juliet was the owner of the house. Conversely, it could be any house Juliet stood nearby, for example. The remaining two cases were not necessarily the examples of future reference. Deprived of apostrophes, the

utterances could be divided into two parts; the first one referring to the future, the second part beginning a new thought with the word *time*.

7.2. The criterion of text coherence

In terms of text coherence, the whole body of evidence testified to a number of expressions on which the sample overrelied. Those chunks of language the subjects resorted to notoriously in their performance were categorised as the OVERUSE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS.

To this type belonged only two expressions, but they were sufficient to make the texts produced totally or partly meaningless. As regards the expressions overused by the sample, the expression *generally speaking* appeared 211 times, whereas *in my opinion* was used as many as 193 times. As a result, the discourses were poor in quality and hardly informative or just “contentless”.

7.3. The summary of findings

By and large, the third measurement identified 32 categories of the symptoms indicative of fossilization:

CRITERION OF ACCURACY	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE
GRAMMAR	OMISSION OF ARTICLES	40
	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL & SINGULAR FORMS	10
	WRONG PREPOSITIONS	8
	MISUSE OF ARTICLES	7
	WRONG WORD ORDER	5
	MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	4
	MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS	4
	MISUSE OF OTHER / ANOTHER	3
	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT/INDIRECT QUESTIONS	3
	WRONG VERB PATTERNS	3
	PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS	2
	PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE	2
	LACK OF SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD	2
	PROBLEMS WITH SO & SUCH	2
	WRONG PRONOUNS	2
	WRONG VERB FORMS	1
	WRONG VERBS	1
	WRONG QUANTIFIERS	1
	PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON	1
	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS	1
	OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS	1
	PROBLEMS WITH CASE	1
	PROBLEMS WITH MUST & HAVE TO	1
LEXIS	WRONG WORDS	23
	WRONG COLLOCATIONS	4
	NON – EXISTENT WORDS / PHRASES	2
MORPHOLOGY	WRONG PREFIXES	1
	WRONG SUFFIXES	1
SPELLING	WRONG SPELLING	34
PUNCTUATION	WRONGLY USED APOSTROPHES	2
	LACK OF APOSTROPHES	3
CRITERION OF TEXT COHERENCE	USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS	404

Table 5.11. Written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 3)

The criterion of language accuracy gave rise to 5 types of fossilization syndromes; grammatical, lexical, morphological, spelling and punctuation-related ones. Taking into account the variety and scope of appearance, grammatical symptoms prevailed. They were divided into 23 different categories of a varying degree of occurrence, the most frequently occurring of which were the omission of articles, and problems with plural/singular forms. As regards the remaining 4 types, spelling and lexis-related symptoms of fossilization are worth mentioning since they were not only particularly numerous, but also highly detrimental to the quality of the subjects' performance.

As far as the criterion of text-coherence is concerned, it allowed for distinguishing one category of subjects' behaviours symptomatic of fossilization, namely the overuse of fixed expressions:

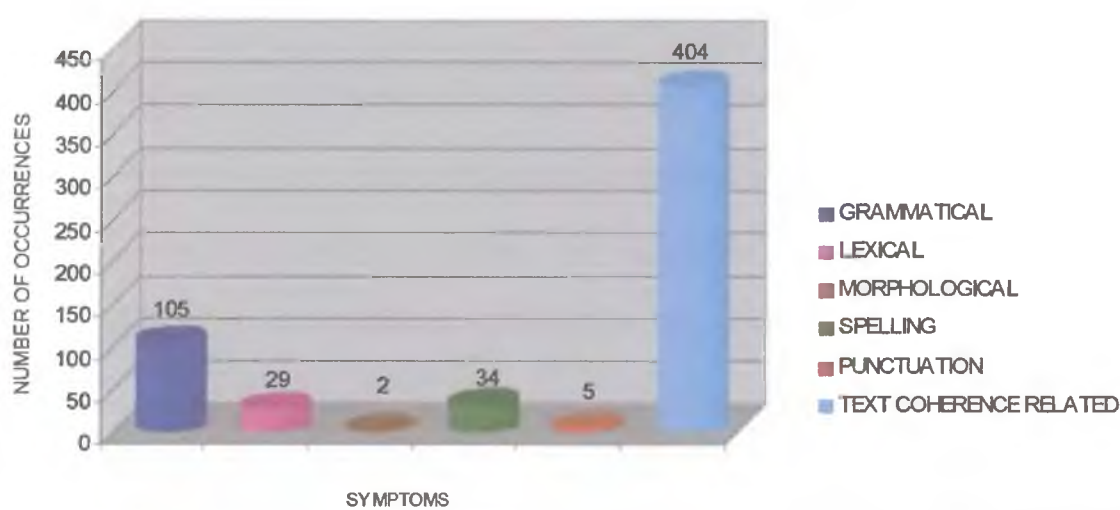


Fig. 5.6. Written symptoms of fossilization – accuracy vs text coherence (measurement 3)

Following the figures hinted at above, it goes without saying that the incidence of fixed expressions predominated and outweighed the total number of the appearance of other fossilization syndromes.

8. Oral and written performance – measurement 1

This section is intended to compare the subjects' oral and written performance at the time of the first measurement. The comparison in question is two-fold, i.e. quantitative and qualitative. The former concentrates on the number of particular categories of fossilization syndromes, and the frequency of appearance

each of them scored in subjects' oral and written discourses. The latter, on the other hand, is centred upon the very types and categories of the symptoms of fossilization, with an emphasis on similarities and differences with respect to the quality of the language produced.

The information on both the number and types of fossilization symptoms is presented in Table 5.11. As can readily be seen, the proportions of the categories of oral and written symptoms indicative of fossilization reached 24 to 14 in the case of grammar, and 1 to 2 with respect to lexis. The remaining categories constituted groups of fossilization symptoms specific to one type of discourse exclusively. To the oral ones belonged 2 phonological and 7 fluency-related categories. Accordingly, the written symptoms of fossilization were represented by 1 morphology, 1 spelling, 1 punctuation and 1 text coherence-related category, such as:

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
GRAMMAR	18	16	OMISSION OF ARTICLES
	13	3	LACK OF SUBJECT – VERB CONCORD / AGREEMENT
	9	-	WRONG WORD ORDER
	8	-	WRONG STRUCTURES / SENTENCE PATTERNS
	8	4	WRONG VERB PATTERNS
	7	-	MISUSE OF PRONOUNS
	6	-	SUBJECT OMISSION
	4	-	WRONG PREPOSITIONS
	3	4	PROBLEMS WITH NUMBER / PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL / SINGULAR FORMS
	3	-	WRONG CONJUNCTIONS
	3	-	WRONG PRONOUNS
	3	-	VERB OMISSION
	-	3	MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
	2	-	DOUBLE VERBS
	2	-	LACK OF NOUN – PRONOUN AGREEMENT
	2	-	PROBLEMS WITH “OTHER” / “THE OTHER”
	2	1	MISUSE OF ARTICLES
	-	2	OMISSION PREPOSITIONS
	1	-	OMISSION CONJUNCTIONS
	1	-	DOUBLE NEGATION
	1	-	MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
	1	1	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT / INDIRECT QUESTIONS
	1	-	OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
	1	-	OVERUSE OF PRONOUNS
	1	-	MISUSE OF QUANTIFIERS

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
GRAMMAR	1	-	WRONG TENSE
	-	1	OMISSIONS OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
	-	1	PROBLEMS WITH CASE
	-	1	OMISSION OF VERBS
LEXIS	10	12	WRONG WORDS
	-	1	WRONG COLLOCATIONS
MORPHOLOGY	-	2	WRONG PREFIXES
PHONOLOGY	19	-	DIFFICULTIES WITH STRESS
	15	-	PROBLEMS WITH PRONUNCIATION
SPELLING	-	17	WRONG SPELLING
PUNCTUATION	-	1	WRONG PUNCTUATION
FLUENCY / TEXT COHERENCE	121	-	PAUSES
	104	194	USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS
	60	-	REPETITIONS
	42	-	REFORMULATIONS
	18	-	ALL - PURPOSE WORDS

Table 5.12. Oral and written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 1)

8.1. Oral and written performance - similarities

As regards the very types of the symptoms of fossilization common to both spoken and written discourses, these comprised:

- omission of articles,
- wrong verb patterns,
- wrong sentence patterns/ wrong structures,
- problems with number/problems with plural and singular forms,
- misuse of prepositions,
- lack of subject-verb concord/lack of subject-verb agreement,
- problems with direct/indirect questions,
- misuse of articles,
- wrong words, and
- fixed expressions/ overuse of fixed expressions.

The language categories enumerated here can be called “universal”. It means that they appear irrespective of the discourse the subjects produce.

8.2. Oral and written performance - differences

The oral-written discrepancies (Table 5.11) can be divided into two groups, i.e. those which appeared only in the subjects’ oral responses, and the ones which occurred within the constraints of the written discourse exclusively. To the former type referred 24 categories, notably:

- wrong word order,
- wrong verb forms,
- subject omission,
- wrong prepositions,
- wrong conjunctions,
- wrong pronouns,
- verb omission,
- double verb,
- lack of noun-pronoun agreement,
- problems with other/the other,
- omission of conjunctions,
- double negation,
- overuse of prepositions,
- overuse of pronouns,

- misuse of quantifiers,
- wrong tense,
- difficulties with stress,
- problems with vowel pronunciation,
- pauses,
- repetitions,
- reformulations,
- all-purpose words,
- unfinished sentences, and
- meaningless sentences.

Most of the grammatical symptoms the sample produced can be accounted for the nature and specificity of the oral discourse. Unplanned and spontaneous responses are likely to result in omissions, such as verb, subject or conjunction omission presented above. What is more, examples of language misuse and abuse, reflected in both longer strings of the language, such as wrong word order, wrong verb forms, wrong tenses, and one-word utterances represented by wrong prepositions, pronouns or conjunctions are expected to appear in the former case, as well as the overuse of the above-stated parts of speech regarding the latter situation. The circumstances under which the speakers express themselves (pace of speech and time pressure) give rise to phonological problems, evident in stress misplacement, and mispronunciation of individual sounds. Lack of time for preparation and organization, on the other hand, is, more often than not, responsible for pauses, repetitions, reformulations, all-purpose words, as well as unfinished/meaningless utterances the speakers make use of.

The second group, i.e. the language forms typical of the written performance included:

- misuse of pronouns,
- misuse of relative pronouns,
- omission of prepositions,
- omission of relative pronouns,
- problems with case,
- omission of verbs,
- wrong collocations,
- wrong prefixes,

- wrong spelling, and
- wrong punctuation.

The inaccuracies listed at this point reflect the nature of the written mode of the language. Given time for planning, organization and realization of their discourses, the subjects rely on more sophisticated grammatical structures and vocabulary items. These, many a time, lead to the instances of language misuse or omission, such as the misuse of pronouns or verbs, pronoun or preposition omission. Also, they bring about wrong collocations, wrong spelling, and even problems with punctuation.

9. Oral and written performance – measurement 2

What follows is a comparison of oral and written performance the subjects under investigation produced at the time of the second measurement. As was previously the case, the comparison is based on both quantitative and qualitative data derived from the study. The former is representative of the incidence of particular types and categories of fossilization syndromes, whereas the latter gives evidence of their quality being the scope and extent of the language forms indicative of fossilization.

Basing on the information presented below (Table 5.12), the ratio of the categories comprising oral and written symptoms of fossilization is 22 to 16 in terms of grammar, 2 to 4 when it comes to lexis, and 1 to 2 in the case of morphology respectively. The remaining categories do not overlap at the level of discourse types, and, hence, give rise to 2 types of fossilization syndromes characteristic of oral responses, and 3 groups of fossilization syndromes illustrative of the written production. The oral-specific categories comprise 2 phonological and 6 fluency-related symptoms, whereas the written-oriented categories consist of 1 spelling, 1 punctuation and 1 text-coherence-related syndromes. The exact proportions were the following:

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
GRAMMAR	28	6	MISUSE OF ARTICLES
	22	21	OMISSION OF ARTICLES
	20	5	WRONG VERB PATTERNS
	15	-	WRONG WORD ORDER
	10	10	LACK OF SUBJECT – VERB CONCORD / AGREEMENT
	10	8	WRONG STRUCTURES / SENTENCE PATTERNS
	7	-	PROBLEMS WITH „SOME” & ”A” / ”AN”
	7	-	PROBLEMS WITH PRONOUNS
	6	6	WRONG USE OF PREPOSITIONS
	3	6	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
	1	-	OVERUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
	-	4	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL / SINGULAR FORMS
	3	3	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT / INDIRECT QUESTIONS
	3	3	WRONG USE OF PRONOUNS
	3	-	SUBJECT OMISSION
	3	-	DOUBLE VERBS
	2	-	PROBLEMS WITH REPORTED SPEECH
	1	2	PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON
	-	2	PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE
	-	1	PROBLEMS WITH CASE
	-	1	OMISSION OF VERB INFLECTIONS
	1	4	WRONG VERB FORMS
	1	-	PRONOUN OMISSION
	1	-	VERB OMISSION
	1	-	PROBLEMS WITH ”OTHER” / ”THE OTHER”
	1	-	PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
LEXIS	16	17	WRONG WORDS
	-	1	WRONG COLLOCATIONS
	-	1	WRONG PHRASAL VERBS
	-	1	NON - EXISTENT WORDS / PHRASES
	1	-	WRONG PHRASES / EXPRESSIONS
MORPHOLOGY	1	2	WRONG SUFFIXES
	-	1	WRONG PREFIXES
	5	-	WRONG PRONUNCIATION
PHONOLOGY	2	-	STRESS PROBLEMS
	-	26	WRONG SPELLING
SPELLING	-	3	LACK OF APOSTROPHES
PUNCTUATION	157	-	PAUSES
	60	-	REPETITIONS
	31	-	REFORMULATIONS
	24	-	ALL - PURPOSE WORDS
	5	-	MEANINGLESS SENTENCES
	5	-	UNFINISHED SENTENCES
	-	699	USE OF FIXED EXPRESSIONS
FLUENCY/ TEXT COHERENCE			

Table 5.13. Oral and written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 2)

9.1. Oral and written performance – similarities

As far as similarities in the subjects' oral and written performance are concerned, a list of the so called "universal" symptoms is provided:

- misuse of articles
- omission of articles,
- wrong verb patterns,
- lack of subject-verb concord/lack of subject-verb agreement,
- wrong sentence patterns/wrong structures,
- omission of prepositions,
- problems with direct/indirect questions,
- wrong verb forms,
- problems with comparison,
- wrong words, and
- wrong suffixes.

By universal are understood those language inaccuracies which appear regardless of the mode of the language the subjects use. To put it differently, the list comprises those fossilization symptoms, the occurrence of which is conduced by the nature of the discourse per se.

9.2. Oral and written performance – differences

The discourse-specific symptoms of fossilization, on the other hand, constitute the source of differences between the subjects' oral and written production. The symptoms characteristic of the subjects' oral performance consisted in 22 categories, namely:

- wrong word order,
- lack of subject/object-pronoun agreement,
- problems with some and a/an
- wrong use of prepositions,
- wrong use of pronouns,
- subject omission,
- double verb,
- problems with reported speech,
- wrong use of relative pronouns,
- pronoun omission,
- verb omission,

- problems with other/others,
- problems with conditionals,
- wrong phrases/expressions,
- wrong pronunciation,
- stress problems,
- pauses,
- repetitions,
- reformulations,
- all-purpose words,
- unfinished sentences, and
- meaningless sentences.

Being fast and high rated in nature, the oral discourses are expected to reveal the subjects' weak points, manifested in omissions, such as pronoun, verb or subject omission, language misuse, for example, wrong use of relative pronouns, prepositions, or problematic cases like conditionals and reported speech. As unprompted and unplanned, the oral performance is likely to reflect the subjects' pronunciation and stress problems. Its spontaneity and lack of organization, on the other hand, lead to the use of pauses, repetitions, reformulations, all purpose words, as well as unfinished and meaningless sentences.

Accordingly, to the symptoms of fossilization conducted by the nature of the written discourse referred:

- problems with pronouns,
- wrong prepositions,
- overuse of prepositions,
- problems with plural and singular forms,
- problems with passive,
- problems with case,
- omission of verb inflections,
- wrong collocations,
- wrong phrasal verbs,
- non-existent words/phrases,
- wrong prefixes,
- wrong spelling,
- lack of apostrophes, and

- fixed expressions.

Here, time for planning and organization is likely to incline the subjects to use more complex structures and flowery language in general, leading to, for example, case problems, difficulties with passive and plurality on the one hand, as well as wrong or even non-existent words/phrases, cases of misspelling and mispronunciation on the other hand. Furthermore, the subjects' unsuccessful attempts to recall the desired constructions and vocabulary are expected to bring about the overuse of fixed expressions on their part.

10. Oral and written performance – measurement 3

Here, the case in point is a comparison of subjects' oral and written performance recorded during the third measurement. The following discussion is conducted quantitatively and qualitatively. It raises the issue of the incidence of fossilization syndromes and their scope respectively.

Building on the quantitative data, the proportions of the so called oral and written symptoms of fossilization are 22 to 23 in the case of grammar, and 1 to 3 in relation to lexis accordingly. The remaining groups of fossilization syndromes included 1 phonological and 5 fluency-related categories with respect to the oral discourse, and 2 morphological, 1 spelling, 2 punctuation, and 1 text-coherence-related categories identified in the course of the written performance. All of the research findings are included in the following table (Table 5.13.):

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
GRAMMAR	23	40	OMISSION OF ARTICLES
	10	7	MISUSE OF ARTICLES
	10	3	WRONG VERB PATTERNS
	4	8	WRONG PREPOSITIONS
	4	5	WRONG WORD ORDER
	-	4	MISUSE OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
	-	4	MISUSE OF PREPOSITIONS
	4	-	WRONG STRUCTURES / SENTENCE PATTERNS
	4	-	WRONG TENSE
	4	2	WRONG PRONOUNS
	3	3	MISUSE OF "OTHER" / "ANOTHER"
	3	3	PROBLEMS WITH DIRECT / INDIRECT QUESTIONS
	3	2	PROBLEMS WITH CONDITIONALS
	-	2	PROBLEMS WITH PASSIVE
	-	2	PROBLEMS WITH "SO" & "SUCH"
	2	-	VERB OMISSION
	2	-	SUBJECT OMISSION
	2	-	DOUBLE VERBS
	1	1	WRONG VERB FORMS
	-	1	WRONG VERBS
	-	1	WRONG QUANTIFIERS
	-	1	PROBLEMS WITH COMPARISON
	1	1	OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS
	1	1	OMISSION OF RELATIVE PRONOUNS
	-	1	PROBLEMS WITH CASE
	-	1	PROBLEMS WITH MUST & HAVE TO
	1	-	LACK OF PRONOUN - NOUN AGREEMENT

CRITERION	ORAL	WRITTEN	SYMPTOMS OF FOSSILIZATION
GRAMMAR	1	-	OBJECT OMISSION
	1	-	DOUBLE NEGATION
	1	10	PROBLEMS WITH PLURAL / SINGULAR FORMS
	1	2	LACK OF SUBJECT - VERB CONCORD / AGREEMENT
LEXIS	18	23	WRONG WORDS
	-	4	WRONG COLLOCATIONS
	-	2	NON - EXISTENT WORDS / PHRASES
	-	1	WRONG PREFIXES
MORPHOLOGY	-	1	WRONG SUFFIXES
PHONOLOGY	16	-	PROBLEMS WITH PRONUNCIATION
SPELLING	-	34	WRONG SPELLING
PUNCTUATION	-	3	LACK OF APOSTROPHES
	-	2	WRONGLY USED APOSTROPHES
	248	-	PAUSES
	84	-	REPETITIONS
FLUENCY / TEXT - COHERENCE	76	404	FIXED EXPRESSIONS
	66	-	ALL-PURPOSE WORDS
	46	-	REFORMULATIONS

Table 5.14. Oral and written symptoms of fossilization (measurement 3)

10.1. Oral and written performance – similarities

14 symptoms of fossilization appeared to be common to oral and written discourse. These constituted:

- omission of articles,
- misuse of articles,
- wrong verb patterns,
- wrong word order,
- wrong pronouns,
- problems with direct/indirect questions,
- problems with conditionals,
- lack of subject-verb agreement/lack of subject-verb concord,
- problems with plural and singular forms,
- omission of prepositions,
- omission of relative pronouns,
- wrong verb forms,
- wrong words, and
- fixed expressions/overuse of fixed expressions.

To this group belonged those linguistic behaviours the subjects displayed when speaking and writing. Thus, it seems legitimate to say that the very symptoms of fossilization they produced were a direct reflection of the subjects' linguistic competence, not the effect of the discourse type as such. The latter, though, could be responsible for the number of occurrences of given linguistic forms/structures.

10.2. Oral and written performance – differences

The discourse-specific differences did exist and were of two kinds, the first of which covered the cases typical of the oral discourse, the other, on the other hand, consisted of the written-symptoms of fossilization exclusively. To the former type referred:

- omission of verb inflections,
- wrong structures,
- wrong tense,
- wrong prepositions,
- verb omission,
- subject omission,
- double verb,

- lack of pronoun-noun agreement,
- object omission,
- double negation,
- problems with pronunciation,
- pauses,
- repetitions,
- all-purpose words,
- reformulations, and
- fixed expressions.

As was previously the case, the lack of subjects' preparation brought about numerous omissions and examples of language misuse, such as verb, object and subject omission in the former case, and wrong structures, tenses or prepositions in the latter. The pace and expression of oral production were likely to be blame for pronunciation problems. Lack of time for planning what to say next, on the other hand, was probably the source of pauses, repetitions, all-purpose words, reformulations and fixed expressions the subjects relied on.

The reverse situation, namely the symptoms of fossilization characteristic of the written discourse specifically are encapsulated in the following behaviours:

- wrong prepositions,
- misuse of relative pronouns,
- misuse of prepositions,
- misuse of other/another,
- problems with passive,
- problems with so and such,
- wrong verbs,
- wrong quantifiers,
- problems with comparison,
- problems with case,
- problems with must and have to,
- wrong collocations,
- non-existent words/phrases,
- wrong prefixes,
- wrong suffixes,
- wrong spelling,

- wrongly-used apostrophes, and
- lack of apostrophes.

Judging by the afore-mentioned examples, the difficulties the subjects displayed in their pieces of writing may derive from the use of complex grammatical structures and lexis. As regards grammar, the respondents' problems covered passive, comparison, *so* and *such*, case, *must* and *have to*, relative pronouns and prepositions, to name a few. The lexical inaccuracies the sample produced, on the other hand, were visible in wrong collocations, and non-existent words/phrases. Additionally, the subjects' revealed their problems with prefixes and suffixes, as well as word spelling and punctuation, apostrophes in particular.

11. Fossilization development

The above-presented discussion of the results of each of the three measurements conducted within the frame of the study pointed to the similarities and differences between the subjects' spoken and written language in terms of fossilization. What follows is a comparison of the measurements in focus, tracing the dividing lines of fossilization development.

11.1. Measurement 1 & 2

The first dividing line represented the language change(s) that occurred between the first and the second measurement (see Appendix 15).

SCOPE OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE			
	MEASUREMENT 1		MEASUREMENT 2	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
GRAMMAR	100	56	152	90
LEXIS	10	13	17	20
PHONOLOGY	34	-	7	-
MORPHOLOGY	-	2	1	3
SPELLING	-	17	-	26
PUNCTUATION	-	1	-	3
FLUENCY - RELATED ISSUES	351	-	281	-
TEXT COHERENCE - RELATED ISSUES	-	194	-	699

Table 5.15. Fossilization development (measurement 1 & 2)

Judging by a huge increase in the number of text-incoherence occurrences (from 194 to 699), it can be stated with no reservations that fossilization expanded most dramatically in this particular language area. Increasing fossilization tendencies were

also noticed in the case of grammatical structures (from 100 to 152 occurrences in oral speech, and from 56 to 90 in written discourses). Although on a smaller scale, fossilization developed within lexis, and its extent grew from 10 to 17 examples in oral performance, and 17 to 20 in the written language production. Similar in scope was spelling, where the number of fossilised features extended from 17 to 26, whereas the lowest rate of fossilization progress was observed in relation to morphological forms, i.e. it changed from 0 to 1 in the spoken language, and from 2 to 3 cases in writing, and punctuation, increasing from 1 to 3 occurrences altogether. The reverse situation, notably fossilization non-development, was detected at the level of fluency-related issues. This, in turn, can be treated as an explanation for, among other things, a decreasing number of phonological errors (from 34 to 7) reflecting a smaller degree of fossilization with respect to phonology.

11.2. Measurement 2 & 3

When it comes to the time-period between the second and the third measurement, the language situation changed diametrically (see Appendix 15).

SCOPE OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE			
	MEASUREMENT 2		MEASUREMENT 3	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
GRAMMAR	152	90	88	105
LEXIS	17	20	18	29
PHONOLOGY	7	-	16	-
MORPHOLOGY	1	3	-	2
SPELLING	-	26	-	34
PUNCTUATION	-	3	-	5
FLUENCY - RELATED ISSUES	281	-	520	-
TEXT COHERENCE - RELATED ISSUES	-	699	-	404

Table 5.16 Fossilization development (measurement 2 & 3)

As seen from the above, it was disfluencies that increased most visibly, reaching 520 cases. Fossilised grammatical structures spread from 90 to 105, though only in the case of the written production. Lexical fossilization developed more in writing than speaking, escalating from 20 to 29 instances in the former, and from 17 to 18 in the latter. Growing tendencies of fossilization were also recorded in connection to phonology, morphology, spelling, and punctuation, but they were rather insignificant. What changed considerably constituted text incoherence-related issues,

decreasing rapidly from 699 to 404 inaccuracies. This quality “improvement” in the written production, however, seems to take place at the expense of the quality of spoken discourses (an increase from 281 to 520 occurrences in toto), where fossilization extends to a considerable extent.

11.3. Measurement 1 & 3

Fossilization development is much bigger, if not the biggest, when comparing the two outermost poles, i.e. the first and the third measurement depicting the initial and the final state of fossilization (see Appendix 15).

SCOPE OF FOSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE			
	MEASUREMENT 1		MEASUREMENT 3	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
GRAMMAR	100	56	88	105
LEXIS	10	13	18	29
PHONOLOGY	34	-	16	-
MORPHOLOGY	-	2	-	2
SPELLING	-	17	-	34
PUNCTUATION	-	1	-	5
FLUENCY - RELATED ISSUES	351	-	520	-
TEXT COHERENCE - RELATED ISSUES	-	194	-	404

Table 5.17 Fossilization development (measurement 1 & 3)

Deriving from the table, the figures provide concrete evidence of progressive fossilization. To start with, it evolves most visibly both at the level of language fluency (from 351 to 520 cases) and coherence (from 194 to 404 occurrences). What is more, a large increase in fossilised structures (from 56 to 105) was spotted in writing. Developmental in character was also the proportion of fossilised words, growing from 13 to 29 in the case of the written performance, and from 10 to 18 in speaking. The number of misspelled language forms reached as many as 34, whereas punctuation-related inaccuracies changed slightly from 1 to 5. Regressive fossilization, on the other hand, was represented by a lower number of phonological errors (a decrease from 34 to 16). Such a small language regression can be tantamount to a small growth in students’ language abilities. By the same token, dominant tendencies reflecting fossilization development can be interpreted as language regression and/or backsliding the subjects in question experience.

11.4. Measurement 1, 2 & 3

As fossilization appeared to be developing most visibly between the first and the third measurement (see Appendix 15), it seems legitimate to treat the second one as temporary and transitory in character. Its temporariness stems from the fact that it is neither decisive nor conclusive as regards the scope and direction of fossilization.

SCOPE OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE					
	MEASUREMENT 1		MEASUREMENT 2		MEASUREMENT 3	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
GRAMMAR	100	56	152	90	88	105
LEXIS	10	13	17	20	18	29
PHONOLOGY	34	-	7	-	16	-
MORPHOLOGY	-	2	1	3	-	2
SPELLING	-	17	-	26	-	34
PUNCTUATION	-	1	-	3	-	5
FLUENCY - RELATED ISSUES	351	-	281	-	520	-
TEXT COHERENCE - RELATED ISSUES	-	194	-	699	-	404

Table 5 18. Fossilization development (measurement 1, 2 & 3)

To illustrate a few examples, a sudden increase of fossilization in the second measurement (as it was the case with grammatical structures) culminates in a sharp decrease of the afore-mentioned in reference to speaking, and a significant reduction when it comes to writing. The same seems to be true of text coherence-related issues, where the symptoms of fossilization evolve from 199 occurrences to 699 ones, declining in number at the time of the third measurement. To prove that these are not the only rules and regularities here, the scope of fossilised lexis broadens within the frame of the first two measurements, and continues to grow further on. In a similar way, the extent of the so called “spelling fossilization” grows from 17 (measurement 1) to 26 (measurement 2) only to reach 34 in the end. To see it from yet another perspective, a marked decline in the number of fossilised phonological forms (from 34 to 7) changes into a sudden growth within the scope of the third measurement. And, finally, the proportions of disfluencies fall from 351 to 281 only to reach 520 in the final.

In trying to account for the above-mentioned tendencies, the source of the changes in question seems to lie in the changes the subjects undergo with respect to their linguistic competence. As it was suggested before, fossilization development is

resultative of the subjects' non-learning, whereas regression in fossilization is considered to be a reflection of their learning in progress. Taking into account this regularity, the author of the thesis proposes to construe fossilization as a bi-polar process defined by means of the relations between the knowledge (non)-growth (pole 1) and language (non)-development (pole 2). The knowledge growth is expected to bring about a decrease in the number of fossilised language behaviours. The opposite situation, i.e. the lack of knowledge growth is believed to lead to language non-development, the result of which being language fossilization.

12. Recapitulation

Chapter V constituted a detailed analysis of data collected over the period of 3 measurements, including the characteristics of the subjects' oral performance, a description of their written text samples, as well as a comparison of oral and written discourses the respondents produced. The research findings allowed for a classification of the subjects' erroneous and non-erroneous language behaviours indicative of fossilization, and an account of the process of fossilization development. Given the so called "oral" and "written" symptoms of fossilization, a list of the syndromes considered highly detrimental to the form and content of the language was distinguished, common tendencies among spoken and written discourses were displayed, and routes of the oral and written fossilization were traced.

To the most destructive oral language behaviours identified at the time of the first measurement belonged:

- wrong word order,
- wrong verb forms,
- subject omission,
- wrong use of conjunction,
- omission of prepositions,
- problems with other/the other,
- double verb,
- wrong prepositions,
- wrong quantifiers,
- wrong words,
- wrong tense,

- problems with pronunciation,
- pauses,
- fixed expressions,
- repetitions,
- reformulations, and
- all-purpose words.

The second oral measurement gave rise to the following “disruptive” language behaviours:

- wrong structures,
- problems with some & a/an.
- wrong prepositions,
- subject omission,
- double verb,
- problems with reported speech,
- wrong use of relative pronouns,
- verb omission,
- wrong words,
- pauses,
- repetitions,
- reformulations, and
- all-purpose words.

Accordingly, the third measurement brought about such fossilization-conductive symptoms as:

- wrong verb patterns,
- wrong word order,
- wrong tense,
- wrong preposition,
- wrong pronouns,
- problems with conditionals,
- verb omission, omission of prepositions,
- omission of relative pronouns,
- wrong words,

- problems with pronunciation,
- pauses, and
- fixed expressions.

As far as the written text samples are concerned, the most significant deviations from TL norms observed during the first measurement included:

- wrong use of pronouns,
- problems with number,
- verb omission,
- wrong words,
- wrong spelling,
- wrong punctuation, and
- overuse of fixed expressions.

The second measurement, on the other hand, gave evidence of the following language inaccuracies believed to be fossilization-prone:

- problems with pronouns,
- lack of subject-pronoun agreement,
- omission of prepositions,
- wrong prepositions,
- wrong verb patterns,
- problems with plural/singular forms,
- problems with comparison,
- wrong words,
- wrong collocations,
- wrong phrasal verbs, and
- wrong spelling.

In final, to the most detrimental damages to the written discourse recorded at the time of the third measurement belonged:

- problems with plural/singular forms,
- misuse of relative pronouns,
- misuse of prepositions,
- problems with direct/indirect questions,
- problems with conditionals,
- problems with pronouns,

- omission of relative pronouns,
- problems with case,
- problems with must & have to,
- wrong verb patterns,
- wrong words,
- wrong collocations,
- non-existent words/phrases,
- wrong suffixes,
- wrong spelling,
- wrong punctuation, and
- overuse of fixed expressions.

As regards the so called recurring language problems the subjects' oral performance testified to, the whole body of evidence made it possible to divide them into four groups. The first one constituted the subjects' language behaviours displayed at the time of the first, second and third measurement (e.g. wrong prepositions, wrong words, and pauses). To the second one referred those language forms produced by the sample during the first and second measurement, such as subject omission, double verb, repetitions, reformulations, and all-purpose words. The third one covered those behavioural reflexes common to the second and the third measurement like verb omission. Last but not least, the fourth type was composed of those linguistic utterances specific to the first and the second measurement, i.e. wrong word order, omission of prepositions, wrong tense, problems with pronunciation, and fixed expressions.

The written text samples the respondents produced, on the other hand, consisted of three types of the so called long-standing language problems the subjects in question were beseted with. Analogously, to the first type belonged the subjects' responses observed at the time of the first, second and third measurement, namely wrong words and wrong spelling. The second group constituted the instances of the written discourses typical of the first and third measurement, such as wrong punctuation and overuse of fixed expressions. The third one, as was previously the case, comprised those language forms which persisted over time being the second and the third measurement. To this type referred problems with pronouns, wrong verb forms, and problems with comparison.

Fossilization development happens to be selective and unpredictable. Its selectivity and unpredictability derives from uneven distributions of fossilization syndromes and transformation they undergo from one measurement to another. The most significant changes were visible between the first and the third measurement, where fossilization developed most fully and rapidly. It broadened in number and scope, touching most seriously upon fluency and text coherence-related issues, grammatical and lexical aspects, as well as punctuation and phonology. The exact direction of this development is to be illustrated in terms of the stages of fossilization (Chapter VI).

CHAPTER VI

INTERPRETATION OF STUDY RESULTS:

STAGES OF FOSSILIZATION

1. Introductory comment

The aim of this chapter is to define and discuss stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English as a FL. Based on the research findings presented in the previous chapter, Chapter VI opens with a characteristic of fossilization in relation to the manifestations of fossilization indicators recorded in the course of the study. What follows is a comparison of the outcomes deriving from the three stages of measurement, showing language changes and tendencies observed over time, corresponding to the stages of oral and written fossilization respectively. Each of them relies on the account of the symptoms of fossilization, presented in a quantitative and qualitative manner. Given the information on the incidence and scope of the so called “oral” and “written” fossilization, a characteristic of the stages of fossilization follows. Viewed from the perspective of the three measurements conducted, the division of fossilization is three-fold, and consists in a full description of the level of linguistic (oral and written) competences the subjects displayed on each occasion.

2. Features of fossilization

Following from the behavioural reflexes fossilization displayed within the time-span of the study, the nature of the very phenomenon can be readily characterised by means of three distinctive qualities, namely unpredictability, volatility and non-linearity. Fossilization is unpredictable in that its scope and incidence cannot be either predicted in advance or taken for granted. It can only be diagnosed post hoc, i.e. after a careful analysis of the naturalistic data, and/or the results gained from the learner’s performance on a grammaticality judgement test. Fossilization unpredictability is also evident in changes it undergoes in time, and directions it takes in its development. These, in turn, pertain to fossilization volatility, notably sudden and unexpected language alterations. The changes in question are reflected in the distribution of fossilization indicators:

INDICATORS OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE					
	STAGE 1		STAGE 2		STAGE 3	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
• UNGRAMMATICAL UNITS	100	56	152	90	88	105
• WRONG WORDS/PHRASES	10	13	17	19	18	27
• NON-EXISTENT LEXEMES	-	-	-	1	-	2
• ILL-FORMED WORDS	-	2	1	3	-	2
• WRONG PRONUNCIATION	34	-	7	-	16	-
• WRONG PUNCTUATION	-	1	-	3	-	5
• WRONG SPELLING	-	17	-	26	-	34
• FINAL PAUSES	16	-	24	-	62	-
• FILLED PAUSES	105	-	133	-	186	-
• FILLERS	18	-	24	-	66	-
• REPETITIONS	60	-	60	-	84	-
• FALSE STARTS (REFORMULATIONS)	42	-	31	-	46	-
• UNFINISHED WORDS/PHRASES	3	-	5	-	-	-
• OVERRELIANCE ON CERTAIN STRUCTURES	104	194	-	699	76	404
• OVERUSE OF DISCOURSE MARKERS	-	-	-	-	-	-
• MEANINGLESS EXPRESSIONS	3	-	5	-	-	-

Table 6.1. Manifestations of fossilization indicators

As seen from the above, different types of indicators behave in a different way. To illustrate a few modes of behaviour, the majority of fossilization indicators appear progressive in nature, among them wrong words/phrases and wrong spelling, final and filled pauses, as well as fillers. Were it not for other directions they take, fossilization could be treated linear. What makes it happen the other way round is a great amount of fluidity of ungrammatical units, showing pro(re)gressive tendencies in the case of oral production, and re(pro)gressive ones in written discourses. Equally changeable, though of the opposite character, is overreliance on certain structures, re(pro)gressive in oral speech, and pro(reg)ressive in written performance.

3. Oral fossilization

To be more specific, language changes observed in the subject’s oral performance in the course of the three stages of measurement in the shape of fossilization indicators, consequently, attest to the incidence and scope of fossilization symptoms.

As regards the incidence of fossilization syndromes (Appendix 14), the total number decreases from one stage to another. Grammatical categories of fossilization, which amounted to 24 in the case of the first measurement, were reduced to 22 at the time of the second and third measurement. When it comes to lexis, one single type of

lexical symptoms was recorded on the occasion of the first measurement. Measurement 2 gave rise to two types of lexical syndromes, and the number of occurrences (17) was close to the results of the third measurement (18 in total). Phonological symptoms of fossilization, which scored 34 at the onset of the measurement, decreased twice as much later on. Morphological symptoms appeared on one single occasion, that is measurement 2. Fluency-related symptoms of fossilization varied, from 351 language behaviours recorded at the time of the first measurement to 281 in the case of the second, and 520 observed at measurement stage 3. The exact proportions can be compared on the basis of the figures presented below:

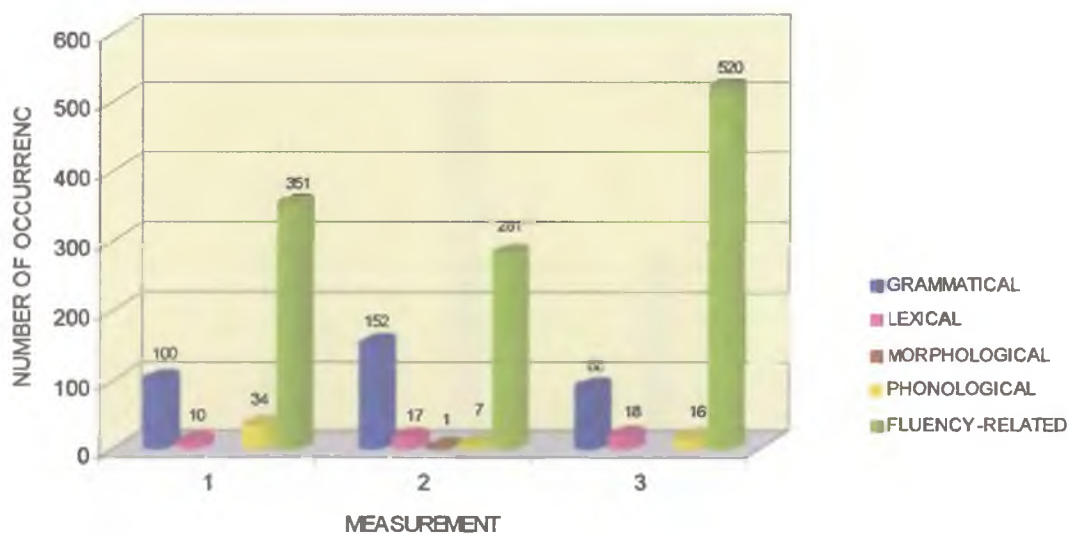


Fig. 6.1. The incidence of oral fossilization (stage 1, 2 &3)

Regarding the scope of fossilization (Appendix 14), three categories, i.e. wrong prepositions, wrong words, and pauses were characteristic of all three stages. Five other categories (subject omission, double verbs, repetitions, reformulations, and all purpose words) were observed at the time of the first and second measurement. Measurements 2 and 3 had one category in common, i.e. verb omission, whereas measurements 1 and 3 were marked by 5 correspondences, namely wrong word order, omission of prepositions, wrong tense, problems with pronunciation, and overuse of fixed expressions.

4. Written fossilization

As regards the number of fossilization syndromes the subjects displayed when writing, it increased over time (see Appendix 14). Grammatical categories ranged from 14 (stage 1) and 16 (stage 2) to 23 (stage 3). When it comes to lexis, it

gave rise to two types of lexical categories in the case of the first measurement, increasing to four types on the occasion of the second measurement, and leading to three different categories reaching 29 occurrences during the third measurement. Morphology brought about one category of fossilization symptoms at the time of the first measurement, while measurements 2 and 3 were characterised by as many as two different categories. Problems with spelling grew from 17 inaccuracies revealed at measurement 1 and 26 observed at measurement 2 to 34 recorded at measurement 3. Growing tendencies were also evident with respect to punctuation and coherence-related symptoms. The preponderance of text coherence-related symptoms of fossilization over the remaining categories is best exemplified in the following figure:

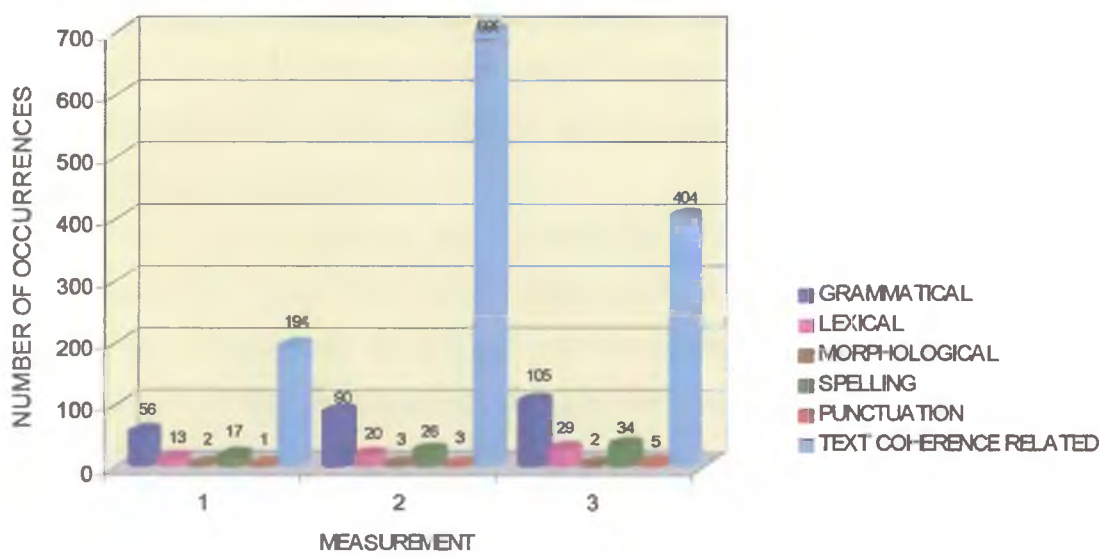


Fig. 6.2. The incidence of written fossilization (stage 1, 2 &3)

Viewed from the perspective of the scope of fossilization (Appendix 14), the language problems the respondents encountered at the first, second and third stage involved wrong words and wrong spelling. Further correspondences covered three categories symptomatic of fossilization, notably problems with pronouns, wrong verb patterns, and problems with comparison common to measurements 2 and 3. Finally, two types of fossilization syndromes, i.e. wrong punctuation and overuse of fixed expressions appeared to be representative of measurements 1 and 3.

5. Division of fossilization into stages

Building on the above-stated, the number of measurements determines the number of the stages of fossilization, whereas the type of measurement defines the

nature of the stages in question. Consequently, three measurements correspond to three stages of fossilization. Oral and written measurements, on the other hand, mark the stages with the so called oral and written symptoms of fossilization each.

5.1. Stage 1 (The here and now stage)

The first stage of fossilization constitutes the point of departure and reference for the subsequent stages. Although it lacks correspondence to the previous stages because there are none of them, it can be contrasted with any of the subsequent stages. Based on the language material deriving from the first measurement, stage 1 gives information on the language competence the subjects represent at this particular time. Having no references to the past and the future as such, the stage can be described as encompassing “the here and now”.

Judging by the very manifestations of fossilization, the first stage is wide in scope when it comes to speaking, and slightly narrower in the case of writing. The extent of fossilization is determined by four and six language areas respectively.

5.1.1. Fossilised oral competence

As far as oral competence is concerned, fossilization touches upon language accuracy (grammar, lexis, phonology) and language fluency.

In terms of grammar, the subjects rely on omissions, language misuse, non-correspondence, overuse and doubled language elements, as well as those language features which pose problems for them (e.g. number or negations). With respect to lexis, the subjects tend to misuse single lexical items. Simply, the choice of vocabulary makes the language produced ambiguous. Phonology, accordingly, is the source of subjects' problems with stress dominating over their problems with pronunciation as such. The former could be exemplified by the use of L1 (Polish) stress, the latter by reliance on L1 pronunciation system.

When it comes to fluency, on the other hand, its determinants are violated being overused. The subjects overuse vocal and silent pauses. Difficulties with expression are interrupted by peals of laughter, and filled in by four types of all-purpose words. Fixed expressions the respondents resort to notoriously involve three kinds of correct conversational routines, and one erroneous expression. Repetitions take on the form of doubled and tripled elements in a sentence. Reformulations are numerous and hardly ever aimed at self-corrections. Unfinished and meaningless sentences appear on a regular basis.

More specifically, both one-word and multi-word utterances undergo changes. To the former belong articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, verbs, sentence subjects, nouns, or determiners, such as *other*. To the latter refer quantifiers, collocations, tenses, word order, sentence patterns, direct/indirect questions, negations, or determiners, such as *the other*.

5.1.2. Fossilised written competence

As regards the written language competence, it is affected on six different levels, that is grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and text coherence. Within grammar, the subjects' performance results in omissions, language misuse, non-correspondence and overuse. Additionally, the subjects use language forms they have problems with, such as number or case. As far as lexis is concerned, the language learners/users make use of the words that do not fit the context, and produce non-existent expressions. Morphological rules are disobeyed, and the resultant language forms are built of wrong prefixes and suffixes. The words the subjects write are misspelled. It entails the use of wrong letters, too many and too few letters in a word, or the so called "in-word" separation. The sentences are mispunctuated. What is more, the discourses produced lack both intra- and inter-sentential links for they are overloaded with one type of fixed expressions.

Traces of fossilization are visible both at the word-class and sentence level. The first one is represented by single articles, prepositions, pronouns, nouns or verbs, the other covers, sentence and verb patterns, subject-verb concord, verb and case inflections, direct/indirect questions, or fixed expressions.

5.2. Stage 2 (The here and there stage)

The second stage of fossilization corresponds to the second measurement conducted. It refers to stage 1 as it covers the symptoms typical of the first stage of fossilization. Apart from that, the second stage gives rise to a number of fossilization reflexes the language learners/users display exclusively at this stage. Due to the fact of this stage-to-stage correspondence, stage 2 can be referred to as containing "the here and there"

Although the oral competence is affected by fossilization on five different language levels, its influence is not wider in scope than it was at stage 1. In the case of the written language, however, fossilization touches upon exactly the same language areas, yet most of the fossilization syndromes are more expanded in scope.

5.2.1. Fossilised oral competence

Regarding the oral language production, the extent of fossilization is marked by inaccurate grammatical, lexical, morphological and phonological language forms, as well as disfluencies.

Grammatical inaccuracies derive from language misuse, non-correspondence, or doubled elements the subjects turn to less frequently than at stage 1, and the use of omissions as well as problem-arising language forms which, at the second stage, are given a higher score. When it comes to lexis, the subjects not only choose the wrong words as such, but they also make wrong word combinations, phrases and whole expressions in particular. The rules of morphology are invariably disobeyed, however, only in relation to suffixes. Phonological problems remain unchanged though it is difficulties with pronunciation of certain phonemes that prevail over stress marking problems. The mispronounced cases, more often than not, consist in the use of Polish vowels to utter English vowel sounds.

Disfluency markers observed at this particular stage involve, among other things, pauses. These increase significantly, and, presumably make no room for the use of fixed expressions. In comparison to stage 1, the number of repetitions employed by the subjects is constant. Nevertheless, the respondents not only double and triple the elements in a sentence, but also quadruple some of them. Reformulations are slightly less common, but they do appear in the shape of the so called “disrepairs” and “self-repairs”. On the contrary, all-purpose words are more frequently used. Not only are they more diversified (five different types of expressions), but also more extended in scope (L1 use). Similarly, unfinished and meaningless sentences increase in number.

As was previously the case, both one-word and multi-word sequences are affected. Aside from articles, prepositions, pronouns, verbs, and sentence subjects characteristic of the first stage, the subjects have problems with adjectives, sentence objects, determiners, such as *others*, or differentiation between the use of *some* and *a/an*. To the list of the longer strings of the language the learners/users had difficulties with at stage 1 are added reported speech, adjective comparison, conditionals, and word combinations.

5.2.2. Fossilised written competence

As earlier stated, the written competence suffers within six language areas, namely grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and text coherence-

related issues. At the level of grammar, the subjects' performance resembles to a large extent that produced at stage 1. Except for the language misuse, which shows a decreasing tendency, the symptoms of language omission, non-correspondence, overuse and language problems constitute the same number of categories. In the case of lexis, the pieces of writing contain not only single words that do not fit the context, and mismatched word combinations, but also incorrect phrasal verbs, and non-existent words as well as phrases. Morphological inaccuracies cover both prefixes and suffixes. The rules of spelling are violated in five different ways. Apart from wrong letters, examples of too many or too few letters in a word, and unnecessary word separation, the subjects order letters in a wrong way. The sentences they produce are mispunctuated due to the lack of apostrophes. The end-products of writing are particularly incoherent because of a multitude of fixed expressions the learners/users make use of at this stage.

Again, the language problems are both word-class and sentence-specific. The very word categories involve invariably articles, prepositions, pronouns, nouns and verbs as such. The other group, aside from sentence and verb patterns, subject-verb concord, verb and case inflections, direct/indirect questions and fixed expressions characteristic of the first stage, comprises adjective comparison, passive voice and three extra types of fixed expressions.

5.3. Stage 3 (The here, there and everywhere stage)

The third stage rests on the results obtained from the third measurement. It encompasses the features that are common to stage 1 and 2. The new symptoms are exceptional and emerge only in the course of writing. A small and limited number of new occurrences, however, makes it possible to treat stage 3 as a continuum and reference to the previous stages. In this view, the third stage can be conceived of as embodying "the here, there, and everywhere".

One of the general tendencies this stage is governed by is a decrease in the number of the categories of fossilization symptoms, and an increase in the frequency of their occurrence in the case of speaking. Writing reflects a reverse situation, that is types of fossilization syndromes appear in their new range.

5.3.1. Fossilised oral competence

What undergoes undesired changes within the scope of oral competence is language accuracy, i.e. grammar, lexis, phonology, and fluency with its distinguishing features.

As for grammar, the subjects' performance manifests a smaller number of the so called "problematic" categories of fossilization syndromes, at the same time leaving room for a far greater number of language omissions, misuse categories, types of language non-correspondence, and doubled elements. Lexical problems are reduced to one single category, notably the use of wrong words, which is given the biggest score of all stages. This time, the subjects use the lexemes being the wrong words within the same word-category, as well as those representative of different word classes. Phonological problems are one-dimensional here, yet the greatest in number. All the instances point to pronunciation difficulties the subjects encounter. Still, the L1 –specific sounds are used when producing L2 utterances.

As far as fluency-related issues are concerned, the extent to which they are impeded, on the one hand, and abused, on the other, is exemplified by the record proportions of pauses, repetitions, all-purpose words, reformulations and fixed expressions. To begin with pauses, expressions of laughter recur with "redoubled strength". So do fillers in the form of L1 features. The Polish-language interludes are not only more frequent, but also longer in nature. Repetitions the learners/users rely on when speaking are three-fold, consisting in doubled, tripled and quadrupled elements. The system of all-purpose words is the most elaborate and numerous since it consists of 8 types of expressions. As regards reformulations, they increase substantially to reach the highest number at this point. The fact that self-repairs decrease in number can be accounted for the subjects' inability to spot the mistakes, let alone fare successfully at corrections. Last but not least, fixed expressions reappear and take on the form of five different types of conversational routines.

The difficulties the subjects face at this particular stage are still manifested in one-word utterances and multi-word strings of language. To the former type belong articles, prepositions, pronouns, verbs and nouns produced in isolation. The latter group, on the other hand, involves negations, word order, tenses, sentence and verb patterns, verb inflections, direct/indirect questions, and conditionals.

5.3.2. Fossilised written competence

Consistently, six language areas determine fossilization of the written language. These constitute grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and fixed expressions.

Grammatical inaccuracies are wider in scope as compared to stage 1 and 2. The number of categories of fossilization symptoms the subjects' performance gives

rise to becomes constant in the case of language omission and non-correspondence, and increases importantly with respect to language misuse and subjects' problem-arising behaviours. When it comes to lexis, words are misused more frequently than at earlier stages. Besides, the number of wrong words prevails over collocations and non-existent phrases produced by the subjects. Problems with morphology persist, bringing about wrong prefixes and suffixes. Spelling difficulties continue with respect to three dimensions, namely too many and too few letters in a word, and wrong letters as such, albeit to a greater degree. In addition to it, the subjects show a propensity for using small letters where unacceptable. Punctuation rules are violated in two different ways; the lack of apostrophes persists, and wrongly-used apostrophes arise.

As regards the coherence of written texts, it is undermined owing to the overuse of fixed expressions. Although the total number of occurrences is lower, the range of expressions is broadened. The subjects seem to rest on pre-fabricated patterns other than before.

As was previously the case, the afore-mentioned can take on the form of individual words, as well as can be operationalised at the syntactic level, including syntactic interrelations. The first group, apart from articles, prepositions, pronouns, nouns and verbs common to stage 1 and 2, is additionally manifested via quantifiers, *so*, *such*, *other* and *another* determiners, or the modal verb *must*. To the other category belong persistent sentence and verb patterns, passivised constructions, conditionals, direct/indirect questions, word order, adjective comparison, as well as case and verb inflections. The “norm” established at the first and second stage is extended here by the modal verb *have to*.

6. Summarising remarks

The scope of the three stages of fossilization is summarised in the following table:

SCOPE OF FOSSILIZATION	FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE					
	STAGE I		STAGE II		STAGE III	
	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN	ORAL	WRITTEN
• GRAMMAR	100	56	152	90	88	105
• LEXIS	10	13	17	20	18	29
• PHONOLOGY	34	-	7	-	16	-
• MORPHOLOGY	-	2	1	3	-	2
• SPELLING	-	17	-	26	-	34
• PUNCTUATION	-	1	-	3	-	5
• FLUENCY – RELATED ISSUES	351	-	281	-	520	-
• TEXT COHERENCE – RELATED ISSUES	-	194	-	699	-	404

Table 6.2. Stages of fossilization

As can readily be seen, the stages are identical in terms of language areas affected in the case of the written language. What differentiates the stages with respect to the oral competence is the appearance of morphological inaccuracies at the second stage. Stage 1 lies in the realms of grammar, lexis, phonology and fluency determinants when it comes to the spoken mode of the language, and grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and text-coherence as regards writing. Stage 2 is marked by grammatical, lexical, phonological, morphological and fluency-related inaccuracies in the case of speaking, while the written part reveals the subjects’ problems with grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation and text-coherence. Stage 3 resembles stage 1, both with respect to the range of oral and written fossilization syndromes.

The proportions of correct and incorrect language forms manifested at the first stage reach 351 and 144 respectively in the case of the oral language, and 194 and 89 accordingly regarding the subjects’ written performance. As far as the second stage is concerned, 280 correct and 178 incorrect language forms were recorded in relation to the subjects’ oral competence, as well as 699 instances of non-erroneous and 142 examples of erroneous fossilization in writing. Accordingly, stage 3 amounts to 520 correct and 122 incorrect occurrences in speaking, as well as 404 correct and 175 incorrect language behaviours within the realm of writing.

The changes observed are persistent with the exception of morphology. Characteristic of the second stage exclusively, morphological problems cannot be treated as either happening regularly or continuously. It seems more adequate to regard them as non-persistent or intermittent difficulties.

As for the tendencies the stages display, it is strongly evident that the so called oral inaccuracies increase from 144 (stage 1) to 178 (stage 2) to reach the

lowest score of 122 at the third stage. Simultaneously, the number of correct occurrences decreases from 351 (stage 1) to 280 (stage 2), and receives 520, the number of which corresponds with decreasing tendencies of parallel erroneous forms. Simply, the use of the former decreases with the overuse of the latter. When it comes to writing, it is represented by a gradual increase with reference to deviations from TL norms, from 89 (stage 1) and 142 (stage 2) to 175 (stage 3). The correct language forms, on the other hand, increase from 194 (stage 1) to 699 (stage 2), and reach the total of 404 occurrences at the third stage. This rapid change can as well be interpreted on the basis of parallel inadequacies. It is an apparent increase of the former that can be responsible for a reducing number of the latter.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. General comment

The main research findings of the previous chapters are presented here in the form of the answers to the research questions. Starting from the phenomenon of fossilization as such, the way the subjects perceive their command of English is pointed out. Next, the stages of fossilization are commented upon, and a comparison of the fossilised language competence with the subjects' self-assessment of their mastery of language is remarked on. Given the evidence of the lack of correspondence between the subjects' actual and perceived linguistic competence, the reasons for the status quo are approached, and solutions to the problem are put forward.

2. Fossilization and fossilization-related issues

Among other things, the research was carried out in an effort to find out whether the advanced language learners and users are aware of the problem of fossilization, as well as the reasons being the source of the problem.

As far as fossilization is concerned, the subjects are well aware of the process itself. 83% of the respondents provide a wide array of definitions, pointing to both erroneous and non-erroneous forms of fossilization. Capable of giving explanations of the very phenomenon, a large proportion of the subjects show ignorance of any of the symptoms indicative of fossilization. Manifestations of fossilization the subjects in question enumerate are, in their opinion, the result of language omissions and wrong language usage. The scope of fossilization the informants have the knowledge about covers grammar, lexis, pronunciation and spelling. Their opinions differ in the face of the syndromes of fossilization they experience. To the most often-quoted ones refer problems with register and formation of words and phrases non-existent in the L2. As regards the factors responsible for the process of fossilization, 19% of the subjects are aware of at least some of the causal factors, and, consequently, emphasize the role of environmental and psychological aspects. The same proportion of the sample seems to be familiarised with possible ways of preventing fossilization. Surprisingly, 95% of the group investigated declare themselves to be afraid of

fossilization. The so called preventive measures the minority of the subjects claim to undertake as FL students involve studying hard, revising material, double-check on the language areas they are uncertain about, extending vocabulary, as well as checking pronunciation and spelling. The actions they use as FL teachers, on the other hand, comprise revisions of language material in the class forum, being well-prepared for the classes, promoting the use of dictionaries, paying special attention to the phase of language practice, and modelling the language by reading aloud and asking the students for repetitions.

3. The subjects' perceived language competence

In the light of general comments the subjects made with regards to fossilization, and a very small extent of fossilised language competence they observed in themselves, the research in question proceeded to inquire about the informants' linguistic competence in a detailed way. The self-assessment the sample undertook revealed a great deal of information on perceptions and awareness the respondents have of their command of English, including both good and bad points.

As the results demonstrated, grammatical aspects are considered by the subjects as relatively easy. To the easiest in this area belong tenses, passive voice constructions and conditionals. Problematic are articles, prepositions as well as reported speech. As far as difficult language areas are concerned, the group examined tends to "complain about" vocabulary and pronunciation, idiomatic expressions in the former case, and stress, intonation, as well as the production of the "th" sound in the latter. The problems the subjects encounter on a regular basis correspond with language mistakes they admit to. The inaccuracies they commit in speaking cover tenses, reported speech, articles, pronunciation of certain phonemes, idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs. In writing, on the other hand, the respondents have a tendency to make lexical and spelling mistakes, the use of inappropriate words, and misspelled language forms.

4. Stages of fossilization

The subjects' perceived language competence constituted the basis for empirical research investigating the subjects' actual performance. The aim of the research was two-fold. First of all, it focused on finding the symptoms of fossilization the respondents do display, yet are not aware of. Secondly, on the basis of the quality of subjects' language production, the study contributed to a division of fossilization syndromes into stages. The questions to be answered at this point

concerned characteristics of a given stage of fossilization, proportions and persistence of particular syndromes, as well as tendencies observed among them.

The data obtained show that the subjects’ language competence is not only abundant in inaccuracies they acknowledge, but it consists of both correct and incorrect language forms, the recurrence of which is not identified by the sample, yet typical of fossilization. The three measurements the study rested upon allowed for a comparison of the changes of linguistic competence, and, hence, differentiation between the three stages of fossilization.

As it turns out, one of the most characteristic features of each stage is the language area affected by fossilization. Following the results, stage 1 ranges from grammar, lexis, phonology and fluency determinants when it comes to speaking, and grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation, as well as text coherence as regards writing. Stage 2 is marked by grammatical, lexical, phonological and morphological inaccuracies as well as disfluencies in the case of speaking, while the written part reveals the subjects’ problems with grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation and discourse coherence. Stage 3 overlaps with stage 1, with respect to the range of both oral and written fossilization syndromes, i.e. it is characterised by grammatical, lexical, phonological and fluency-related manifestations in speaking, as well as marked by grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling, punctuation and text coherence inaccuracies in writing. Some of the most distinctive stage-specific features are particularised in the table below.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF FOSSILIZATION		
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungrammatical structures • Omission of articles • Wrong sentence patterns • Wrong verb patterns • Problems with plural • Lack of S-V concord • Misuse of prepositions • Problems with pronouns • Wrong words • Stress problems • Wrong spelling • Pauses • Repetitions • Reformulations • All-purpose words • Unfinished/meaningless sentences • Fixed expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungrammatical structures • Omission of articles • Misuse of articles • Wrong sentence patterns • Wrong verb patterns • Problems with plural • Lack of S-V concord • Wrong prepositions • Problems with pronouns • Wrong words • Stress problems • Wrong spelling • Lack of apostrophes • Pauses • Repetitions • Reformulations • All-purpose words • Unfinished/meaningless sentences • Fixed expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ungrammatical structures • Omission of articles • Misuse of articles • Wrong verb patterns • Problems with plural • Misuse of prepositions • Wrong prepositions • Problems with pronouns • Wrong words • Wrong collocations • Stress problems • Wrong spelling • Lack of apostrophes • Pauses • Repetitions • Reformulations • All-purpose words • Fixed expressions

Table 7.1. Distinctive features of fossilization

As is clearly seen, a vast majority of the qualities highlighted above reflect language difficulties typical of the Polish learners and users of English. These, among other things, are caused by L1-L2 discrepancies within the language system. Undoubtedly, to the most differentiating of the above-mentioned belong articles, prepositions, word order, as well as prosodic features, to name a few.

The proportions of the symptoms of fossilization are encapsulated in the frequency of occurrence of subjects' behaviour(s) within a given category of fossilization symptoms, and the total number of correct and incorrect language forms being non-erroneous and erroneous fossilization respectively. To quote the evidence from the study, the first stage is characterised by 351 correct and 144 incorrect language forms in the case of the oral language, while the proportion of the subjects' written performance constitutes 194 to 89. Regarding the second stage, 280 correct and 178 incorrect language forms are found in relation to the subjects' oral competence, as well as 699 instances of non-erroneous and 142 examples of erroneous fossilization in writing. Finally, stage 3 is represented by 520 correct and 122 incorrect occurrences in speaking, as well as 404 correct and 175 incorrect language behaviours as regards writing.

Persistence of particular language items is judged by their regular reappearance. Judging by the nature of fossilization syndromes, it can be said with no reservations that it is morphological symptoms of fossilization that are marked by non-persistence, evident in the lack of their continuing existence.

The exact tendencies the language material testifies to are described as increasing and decreasing. Oral inaccuracies increase from 144 (stage 1) to 178 (stage 2), and decrease to 122 at the third stage. At the same time, the number of correct occurrences decreases from 351 (stage 1) to 280 (stage 2), and receives 520 at the third stage. When it comes to writing, it is represented by a gradual increase of deviant language forms from 89 (stage 1) and 142 (stage 2) to 175 (stage 3). The correct language forms, on the other hand, increase from 194 (stage 1) to 699 (stage 2), and reach the total of 404 occurrences at the third stage.

4.1. Stages of fossilization reflecting its dynamic character

This dynamic character of fossilization can be best illustrated and interpreted from the diagram used by Włodarski (1998) to represent the learning curve reflecting the effects of learning (the *y* axis) in relation with time (the *x* axis). Here, by analogy, the horizontal axis is linked with time determined by the three stages of fossilization,

whereas the vertical *y* axis stands for the scope of fossilization defined by the frequency of occurrence of a given category of fossilization syndromes.

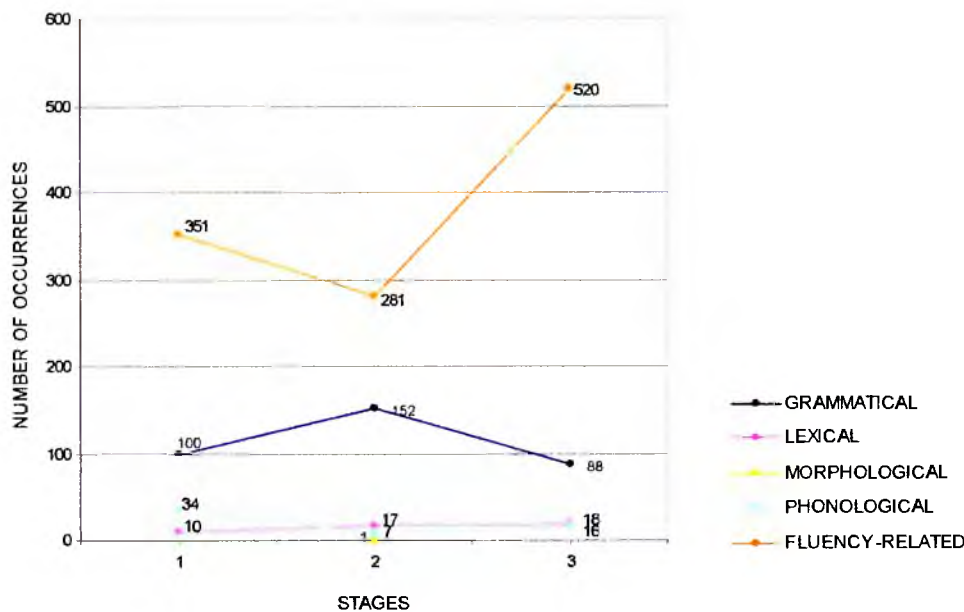


Fig. 7.1. A dynamic nature of oral fossilization

Deriving from the figures, the so called oral fossilization operates on three different patterns indicative of its changes in time. The first one, i.e. the rise-fall pattern, is represented by grammar. The reverse situation, namely, the fall-rise tendency concerns phonology and fluency-related issues, whereas the third regularity, referred to as a slow rise, arises from lexis. The extreme cases, that is, a high and low degree of dynamism are reflected by disfluency markers and lexical inaccuracies respectively. The former is composed of correct and incorrect fixed expressions frequently overused, the latter being identified with the usage of wrong words. As the patterns, generally speaking, can be related to learning, rise-fall designating progress-regress cases, and fall-rise corresponding to improvement-deterioration in learning, the case of disfluencies, though progressive in nature, is indicative of the subjects' language regression.

Similarly, written fossilization is governed by three patterns, however, one of the combinations differs from the previous ones. Aside from the rise-fall and the slow rise tendency, a constellation of the rise-fall-rise patterns comes to light.

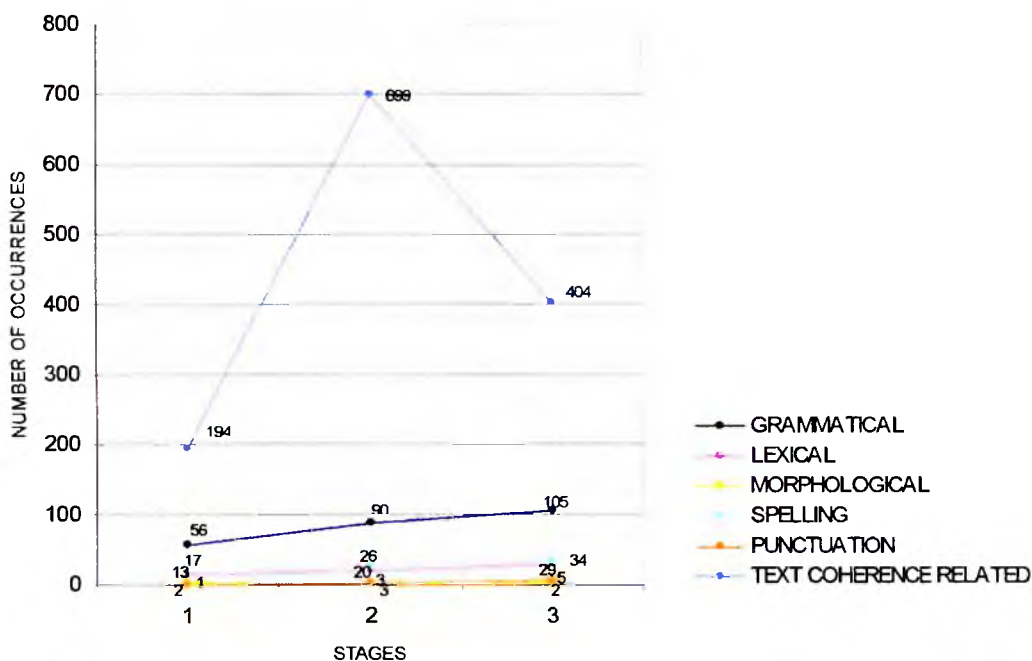


Fig. 7.2. A dynamic nature of written fossilization

This time, it is the rise-fall tendency, made up of the so called text coherence-related issues, that contributes to a large extent to a dynamic nature of the process in question. Such a rapid change in the use of fixed expressions may be a reflection of subjects' improvement, evident in their greater reliance on free rather than fixed expressions, the latter of which proved to be responsible for the production of empty language. Regularities referred to as a slow rise, represented by grammatical, lexical, spelling and punctuation mistakes, testify to a worsening language coverage, and decreasing quality of output, which can be related to the learning problem such as regression. In final, the rise-fall-rise pattern, as in the case of morphology, shows that the level of fossilization fluctuates and so does the subjects' learning process looked at from the perspective of the level of their actual language competence.

5. The subjects' perceived vs fossilised language competence

Stages of fossilization revealed that the subjects' actual (fossilised) competence stands out from their perceived command of language. The question that arises immediately is to what an extent the two competences differ from each other.

Although the respondents' difficulties with tenses, reported speech and articles were proved by the empirical evidence gathered in the course of speaking, a wide array of other grammatical problems appeared. To name a few, these included:

- pronouns,
- adjective comparison,
- quantifiers,
- determiners,
- plural and singular forms,
- conditionals,
- passive voice,
- word order,
- direct/indirect questions,
- subject-verb agreement or
- verb patterns.

Phonological and lexical problems the informants listed in the questionnaire were not only confirmed by the outcomes of the oral measurements, but first and foremost specified. To the former type referred:

- problems with vowel pronunciation and
- stress marking typical of the Polish stress system.

The latter, i.e. lexis-oriented difficulties, comprised:

- suffixes,
- single lexical items,
- phrases and expressions,
- idioms and
- collocations.

Additionally, morphological inaccuracies were found, and plenty of disfluency markers the subjects did not even signalled in their responses collected via the questionnaire appeared. The former contained word formation, both prefixes and suffixes. The latter, on the other hand, consisted in the overuse of pauses, reformulations, repetitions or fixed expressions, to name a few.

As far as the written language is concerned, the subjects' declared problems with lexis and spelling were evident in their pieces of writing. Lexical inaccuracies comprised:

- one-word lexical items,
- collocations and
- phrases or expressions.

Spelling difficulties, on the other hand, involved:

- too many or too few letters in a word,
- letter substitution,
- wrongly-ordered letters,
- small letters instead of capitalised ones or
- word separation.

Judging by the written samples, the extent of difficulties the subjects experience is much wider than in their oral language production. It touches upon grammar, morphology, punctuation and text-coherence. To be more precise, grammatical inaccuracies oscillated around the following:

- articles,
- prepositions,
- pronouns,
- quantifiers,
- determiners,
- number,
- case,
- word order,
- verb patterns,
- conditionals,
- passive voice,
- direct/indirect questions,
- modals or
- subject-verb concord.

Morphological rules were violated at the level of word formation, and, as it was in the case of oral text samples, covered wrong prefixes and suffixes.

Inter- and intra-discourse relations were disturbed by the subjects' overreliance on fixed expressions. These consisted in conversational routine formulas in particular.

6. Reasons and solutions to the problem

In trying to find the reasons for divergences between the subjects' perceived and actual language competence, it is environmental and psychological factors which seem to play the most salient role.

The former ones are embodied in environmental conditions; the classroom situation, its participants (the teacher and the learners) and the medium of instruction

it is organized around. It is this artificiality of the learning/teaching process, and the faulty language the subjects are exposed to on a daily basis that have an impact on both their process- and end-product language. The former denotes the command of English the subjects represented at the time of the research, while the latter entails, for example, their language achievement at the end of their teaching career. It seems that the subjects do not realise that the language used in the classroom setting influences both parties, that is the learners and the teachers. This influence might at least to some extent be responsible for the quality of the language the group examined displayed.

The second explanation, as has already been suggested, lends itself most neatly to psychology. Personality traits the subjects have, as well as the level of self-esteem they represent are likely to be the source of the differences between the alleged and the actual language proficiency level. The sampled subjects seem to be more self-confident than declared, and, secondly, they do not even think about their language being flawed. As long as they maintain this feeling of language satisfaction and self-assurance presented in the questionnaire (95% of the respondents altogether), their self-perceptions of linguistic reality are likely to be distorted.

6.1. Practical advice

Since the classroom setting is impossible to change without transforming its background and location into the TL community, the solution to the problem lies in changing the teachers'/learners' perceptions and attitudes to the language. This can be done by developing their ability to evaluate their command of TL in a reliable way.

The suggestion is to make use of the so-called self-diagnosis, consisting in a self-check list (Table 7.2). The list has been constructed on the basis of the research findings being the symptoms of fossilization most frequently observed. Divided into two sections, the below-presented inventory allows for "scanning" all of the components of linguistic competence with reference to both speaking and writing. As each section is sub-divided into several parts, each corresponding to the language areas affected by fossilization, the table completion guarantees to foster not only the teachers'/learners' language awareness, but also their awareness of fossilization.

CHECK-LIST

PART I ORAL PERFORMANCE

Read the following list of items, and put a tick [x] next to those you happen to produce/experience/use when speaking. A blank space has been left at the end of each section for any items not included which are true for you.

GRAMMAR	
omission of articles	
misuse of articles	
lack of subject-verb agreement	
lack of noun-pronoun agreement	
lack of subject/object-pronoun agreement	
wrong word order	
wrong structures	
wrong verb patterns	
wrong verb forms	
verb omission	
double verb	
omission of verb inflections	
subject omission	
wrong prepositions	
misuse of prepositions	
overuse of prepositions	
omission of prepositions	
problems with plural/singular forms	
wrong conjunctions	
omission of conjunctions	
wrong pronouns	
overuse of pronouns	
pronoun omission	
wrong use of relative pronouns	
omission of relative pronouns	
double negations	
problems with determiners	
problems with direct/indirect questions	
misuse of quantifiers	
wrong tense	
problems with reported speech	
problems with comparison	
problems with conditionals	
object omission	
other...	
LEXIS	
wrong words	
wrong phrases/expressions	
wrong phrasal verbs	
non-existent words/phrases	
other...	
MORPHOLOGY	

wrong prefixes	
wrong suffixes	
other...	
PHONOLOGY	
stress difficulties	
problems with pronunciation	
other..	
FLUENCY	
silent pauses	
vocal pauses	
double repetitions of language sequences	
triple repetitions of language sequences	
quadruple repetitions of language sequences	
all-purpose words	
reformulations in the form of synonym substitution	
reformulations in the form of information shift	
reformulations in the form of structure change	
reformulations aimed at self-correction	
reformulations resulting in deviations from TL norms	
fixed expressions	
unfinished sentences	
meaningless sentences	
other	
PART II WRITTEN PERFORMANCE	
Read the following list of items, and put a tick [x] next to those you happen to produce/experience/use when writing. A blank space has been left at the end of each section for any items not included which are true for you.	
GRAMMAR	
omission of articles	
misuse of articles	
lack of subject-verb agreement	
lack of noun-pronoun agreement	
lack of subject/object-pronoun agreement	
wrong word order	
wrong structures	
wrong verb patterns	
wrong verb forms	
verb omission	
double verb	
omission of verb inflections	
subject omission	
wrong prepositions	
misuse of prepositions	
overuse of prepositions	
omission of prepositions	
problems with plural/singular forms	
wrong conjunctions	
omission of conjunctions	
wrong pronouns	

overuse of pronouns	
pronoun omission	
wrong use of relative pronouns	
omission of relative pronouns	
double negations	
problems with determiners	
problems with direct/indirect questions	
misuse of quantifiers	
wrong quantifiers	
wrong tense	
problems with reported speech	
problems with comparison	
problems with conditionals	
problems with passive	
problems with modals	
object omission	
other...	
LEXIS	
wrong words	
wrong phrases/expressions	
wrong phrasal verbs	
non-existent words/phrases	
other...	
MORPHOLOGY	
wrong prefixes	
wrong suffixes	
other...	
SPELLING	
too many letters in a word	
too few letters in a word	
letter substitution	
wrong order of letters	
small letters where capitalised are required	
word separation	
other...	
PUNCTUATION	
omission of apostrophes	
wrong use of apostrophes	
omission of commas	
wrong use of commas	
other...	
TEXT COHERENCE	
fixed expressions	
other...	

Table 7.2. Self-check list

Although the above-listed inventory rests on the symptoms of fossilization detected among the advanced language learners/users, it can as well be implemented at lower proficiency levels. It can be attended to individually and outside the class environment, with no reference to any particular language course or instruction. Another suggestion is to use the self-check list in the learning context as it can easily be distributed by the teacher to his/her students. If this is the case, the students check themselves, and, consequently, the teacher records their observations practical to both the process of learning and teaching. Also, the inventory in question seems to be useful for other researchers, serving the purpose of the research tool applicable to e.g. selecting the sample.

The self-check should not be treated as a single-use means only. Solved on many occasions and at different time intervals, it can play the role of the measurement tool, revealing changes within one's linguistic competence. Despite the fact that the number and scope of particular syndromes are considered to be dependent on the respondents who complete the list, it is bound to show persistence of linguistic items, on the one hand, and increasing/decreasing language tendencies on the other.

7. Nature of fossilization

The idea of self-controlling the level of language competence seems to be justified on account of the nature of the process of fossilization which can be described as *systematic, dynamic, variable, and idiosyncratic*.

Systematicity equals regularity deriving from a full list of characteristics each of the stages of fossilization can be recognised by. It is evident in the very fossilization syndromes the learners/users suffer from systematically and invariably, that is, at the time of the first, second and third stage. To quote the evidence from the study, these cover, for example, the use of ungrammatical structures, wrong words, pauses or fixed expressions to be found at any level of the subjects' language competence.

Dynamism reveals itself in any (positive/negative) changes observed alongside the continuum, defined by the very points of measurement of the subjects' performance over time. Judging by the results of the present study, both progressive and regressive language changes can be diagnosed. The former, for instance, consist in a decreasing number of certain linguistic difficulties, such as in the case of wrong verb patterns, or a total nivellation of the problem, noticed, for example, among

wrong sentence patterns. The latter, on the contrary, refer to the cases of a worsening language competence, encapsulated in, among other things, an increasing number of fossilization syndromes detected among articles at the second and third stage, or the occurrence of previously unnoticed linguistic problems, like collocation difficulties non-existent until the third stage.

Variability, accordingly, predicts that even those already diagnosed features of fossilization, like its recorded incidence and scope, are likely to change, being influenced by any of the so called key variables, such as the exposure to L2 input, the quality of classroom instruction or individual work on the language material learnt. As the above-mentioned are specific to a language learner/user, often dictated by his/her financial situation as regards the former, and chance and/or choice with respect to the latter, they determine fossilization idiosyncrasy. It implies that the process in question is both indicative and resultative of the learning and teaching experiences individuals have already undergone, go through on a daily basis, and will come through in the future.

8. Fossilization and interlanguage development

In fact, characteristics of fossilization overlap to a great extent with the qualities ascribed to the interlanguage. However regular, changeable and learner/user-specific the two phenomena are, a marked contrast can be observed between the stages of fossilization and interlanguage development. These continuums differ as to the idea placed behind them, functions performed in the process of SLA, and, first and foremost, the route of development they follow.

Taking into consideration the assumptions underpinning interlanguage and its development, they all boil down to the learner's attainment of native-like competence. Fossilization, in contrast, which is given negative connotations right from the start, is likely to be conceived of as the reverse process, namely bringing about competence loss and language failure.

As regards the functions of the interlanguage, they are commonly referred to as TL norm approximation and L2 communication. Definitely, this is not true of fossilization which seems to consist in L1 rather than L2 approximation, and is, hence, more often than not, reminiscent of L1-based and L2-abused standards of communication. These are reflected in the stages of interlanguage and fossilization development respectively.

As the former one, marked by random, emergent, systematic, and stabilised stage with respect to rule internalization and realization, is progressive in nature, the latter appears to rely on the production of random errors intertwined with an interim rule emergence. This is apparent in any of the three stages of fossilization, each of them involving learners/users making guesses and, thus, producing randomly correct discourses (corresponding to the first stage of IL development), making use of sporadic self-correction, making errors in previously non-erroneous language forms, and avoiding certain structures, as well as replacing them with others (typical of the second stage of IL development).

9. Fossilization and learning strategies

One of the reasons for the situation as the above may lie in learning strategies. The assumption is that there exists a mutual influence between learning strategies and fossilization. It appears to be so as the wrong use or the lack of use of the former is likely to facilitate the latter, which, in turn, is expected to have an impact on the wrong choice and inappropriate application of devices, procedures and actions commonly employed to develop, improve and correct the language.

A negative influence of learning strategies is particularly visible when totally uncontrolled, unguided and misfitted. If this is the case, the learners/users may focus too much attention on minor language issues, or, the other way round, important information may be unnoticed due to their selective attention distracted or simply diverted away from it. Second, the use of rehearsal, reflected in, for example, a loud rehearsal of new words, can, among other things, lead to the reinforcement of wrong pronunciation. In case the learners/users look for analogies with Polish equivalents and use Polish as reference when learning, both inferencing and deducing from the context are to be extremely misleading, and result in misunderstanding, both from the perspective of the message sender and receiver. Finally, the strategy of negative transfer, be it used in constructing phrases or whole sentences, is believed to generate incorrect language units which, as was previously the case, may be misconceived in some contexts. Unaware of the consequences such a use of learning strategies may bring, and helpless at changing bad learning habits, the learners/users are more fossilization-prone than “proficient” and well-trained strategy users.

When it comes to the impact fossilization exerts on the use of learning strategies, language learners and users already suffering from fossilization seem to rely on a very limited range of devices in their learning. Judging by the scope of

fossilised language features, and nature of fossilised language, it is to be claimed with no reservations that transfer of rules, and learning by heart predominate over asking others, questioning for clarification, monitoring or evaluation. This is evident in language rigidity and inaccuracy, as well as randomness in the quality of its production.

10. Fossilization and teaching strategies

The level of the learners/users' linguistic competence also depends a great deal on teaching strategies, their choice and frequency of use. Analogously to the previous case, an inappropriate strategy is bound to have a detrimental effect on classroom instruction. To name a few examples, the strategy of routine, which draws on rigid lesson plans and tasks resulting in a repetitive and often patterned practice, is likely to routinise the learners' language behaviours. Equally "dangerous" seems the teacher's deliberate and repeated attempt to lower the group level, realised in the use of simple activities which prevent him/her from answering the subjects' tricky questions, degrading, at the same time, the learners' TL. "Safe" as the teacher can feel in the light of these minimum effort level strategies, it is also his/her linguistic competence that is expected to deteriorate substantially. If this happens, the teacher's talk constitutes yet another source of learners' linguistic problems rather than an example to follow.

Consequently, the teacher's language problems, deriving from his/her linguistic competence getting fossilised, influence his/her choice and frequency of use of particular teaching strategies. The lower competence the teacher represents, the more frequently he/she rests on the strategy of minimum language use. In extreme cases, such as poor language quality, the teacher might turn to the strategy of withdrawal, encapsulated in the lack of feedback, and delayed reactions to any of the learners' language performance. This is to be noticed either when the teacher does not know the correct language form, or, worse, is not aware of the fact that a language mistake has been committed.

11. Fossilization and strategies of communication

Problems with expression are both the symptoms and the outcomes of fossilization. Demonstrated in the use of compensatory strategies to maintain and facilitate communication, they take on the shape of the so called achievement and avoidance communication strategies respectively.

As regards the former, the language learners/users show a propensity to resort to paraphrase, approximation, transfer, L1, and confirmation from the outside. Building on the results from the current study, the use of paraphrase can be reflected in reformulations to be found in initial, middle and final positions of a sentence, and false starts typical of the very opening of a discourse. Approximation has proved to consist in synonyms and substitutions, used when at a vocabulary loss. The effect of transfer is likely to be visible mainly in the wrong word order, and ungrammatical constructions as such. L1, accordingly, is to be manifested in both phrases and expressions, often serving the role of interludes and time-fillers. Last but not least, the language performance is characterised by (rhetorical) questions addressed by the speaker while seeking confirmation of his/her language appropriateness from the hearer.

Avoidance strategies, as the name indicates, rest on omissions and avoidance of certain linguistic features and items. Apart from change of topic or complete silence the learners/users turn to repeatedly, talking off the point and with unfilled pauses respectively, they rely on what Blum-Kulka and Levenston (1983) conceive of as phonological, graphological, morphological, syntactic and void avoidance. Phonological avoidance can be observed when the learners operate on words which are easy and/or easier to pronounce than their synonymous equivalents, or, to quote the evidence from the current research, make use of L1-specific pronunciation/intonation patterns when uncertain about their TL realization. Analogously, in writing, the learners are supposed to base on words, phrases and expressions they have no difficulty in spelling, thus using a very limited range of linguistic items. Morphological avoidance is likely to be demonstrated in the learners' use of unmarked rather than marked language forms, and omissions, such as, for example, in the case of verb inflections, plural –s endings, prefixes and suffixes. Similarly, a regular and well-known structure is expected to prevail over unclear and difficult ones, resulting in simplification and automatization of sentences produced. In final, a tendency for void avoidance is believed to be observed on account of the lack of L1-L2 counterparts. This is especially apparent in the article omission and misuse the Polish learners/users of English give rise to on a permanent basis.

12. Further studies on fossilization

As fossilization is “*languagewide*”, from syntax and morphology to lexis, phonology and graphology, and “*learnerwide*”, concerning all level learners, it needs

to be revisited. The suggestion is to treat fossilization not as a whole, but as a construct submerging different language areas, each affected in a different way. Such an approach is likely to allow for an extensive investigation of one particular language aspect, and, in consequence, result in a detailed description of the stages of fossilization at the level of grammar, lexis or pronunciation exclusively, to name a few. Having conducted such an analytical analysis of fossilization, it seems relevant to approach it from the perspective of language proficiency levels. The idea is to study upper-intermediate or even intermediate levels, where the sense of satisfaction of one's communicative needs is said to be well-developed, and contrast them with the advanced language learners and users of English. What is at issue is both a quantitative and qualitative comparison, namely the incidence and scope of fossilization at each of the levels.

13. Final word

For the time being, it is clear that fossilization at the advanced level differs as to the scope of fossilization symptoms and frequency of their occurrence from one language area to another, and changes from one stage to another. The very division of fossilization into stages should be treated as “fluid” and “moveable” as the stages of fossilization have proved to vary in line with the so called language learner/user profile, i.e. age, L1 background, L2 learning and teaching experiences, etc. For that reason, the stages as such should be perceived as idiosyncratic in nature. Although they have a number of features in common, such as language dimensions, proportions of appropriate and inappropriate language forms, and underlying tendencies, they are neither definitive nor conclusive. Neither is the phenomenon of fossilization nor the language per se.

SUMMARY

This work constitutes an attempt to investigate the stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English.

In Chapter I, the concept of fossilization in the context of the learning/teaching process was described. Subsequently, the theories explaining the nature of the very phenomenon were introduced, and the approaches to the problem were presented. What followed was the scope of fossilization and fossilization-related symptoms, their influence on the quality of language competence being manifested via oral and written language production.

Chapter II touches upon a multi-dimensional nature of fossilization, relating it to the route of (inter)language development. In so doing, the effects of fossilization on the language learning and use are discussed, taking into account the factors that stimulate and/or impede it.

Chapter III constitutes the scheme of the empirical research intended to distinguish and characterise the stages of fossilization in advanced learners and users of English. The sample was composed of the 5th year extramural students studying English as a FL at the English Department of the University of Silesia in Katowice. The research proper was conducted on the basis of the questionnaire as well as oral and written text samples. In order to find the answer to the main research question concerning the scope and extent of fossilization in the subjects under investigation, a list of fossilization indicators reflecting symptoms of the fossilised spoken and written language was proposed. Being longitudinal and diagnostic in character, the study consisted in the three measurements of the subjects' language competence over the period of one year (October 2005 – October 2006).

Chapter IV analyses the data gathered via the questionnaire, that is the background information concerning the age, sex, education, etc. of the group in question, as well as the information on subjects' learning and teaching experiences included in the second part of the questionnaire under the same title. The respondents' task was mainly to self-assess their learning progress and language

abilities, as well as self-evaluate their language achievement and failure in the learning/teaching process. The questionnaire also measured the subjects' knowledge concerning fossilization, its symptoms and circumstances of occurrence, with an emphasis on the fossilization symptoms experienced by the sample.

As it turned out, the majority of the population are satisfied with their language progress and achievement observed mainly within grammar, listening and reading comprehension. Language failure, on the other hand, is identified with pronunciation and vocabulary usage. Although the subjects seem to be aware of the process of fossilization, they do not realize the fact that their language can be fossilized, enumerating few examples of fossilization they noticed in their linguistic performance.

Chapter V presents the research findings derived from the three measurements aimed at examining the subjects' linguistic competence. The quality of the oral and written performance in the form of the subjects' comments on selected proverbs and quotations was discussed, and followed by a comparison of the outcomes resulting from both types of discourses.

As a result, a classification of the so called oral and written symptoms of fossilization was made. In the case of the oral text samples, the measurement criterion consisted of language accuracy and fluency. As regards the former one, the subjects violated grammatical, lexical, morphological and phonological rules of the TL. The latter, however, consisted in numerous examples of non-fluency, such as filled and unfilled pauses, repetitions, false starts or unfinished and meaningless utterances. When it comes to the oral discourse, the criterion of language accuracy remained unchanged, whereas fluency was replaced with text coherence. Incorrect language forms were found in grammar, lexis, morphology, spelling and punctuation. Text incoherence, on the other hand, was caused by the overuse of fixed expressions.

Building on fossilization development, most specifically defined by the results of the first and the third measurement, the three stages of fossilization were distinguished. Presented in Chapter VI, the very stages of fossilization corresponded to the three measurements conducted over time. Each of the stages was characterised by the symptoms of fossilization; their scope and frequency of occurrence, both in speaking and writing. What is more, both correct and incorrect language forms appeared in either case, which overlapped with a division into erroneous and non-erroneous fossilization in the literature of the subject. The proportions showed a

preponderance of appropriate over inappropriate language forms in speaking and writing. The tendencies, accordingly, point to an increase of incorrect language features when contrasting stage 1 and 2, and then a slight decrease of the incorrect language forms resulting from a greater number of correct language expressions as regards speaking. In the case of the written texts, on the other hand, a growing tendency among the incorrect language was observed when comparing all three stages. The number of non-erroneous language forms decreases at the third stage, due to the already-mentioned increase in erroneous language production.

Chapter VII contrasted the subjects' fossilised language competence with their perceived language competence commented upon in the questionnaire. The attempt was made to account for the lack of correspondences, suggesting the influence of the subjects' high level of self-esteem and self-confidence. The solution proposed one of the ways of making the language learners/users aware of the actual level of their competences and scope of fossilization at the same time. It consisted of the self-check list, the completion of which is believed to guarantee a closer look at the language from the perspective of language accuracy, fluency and text coherence. Solved on many occasions and at time-intervals, it is likely to sensitise the respondents to language changes which constitute an integral part of the learning/teaching process.

STRESZCZENIE

W niniejszej pracy podjęto próbę zbadania stadiów fosylizacji języka u uczących się i użytkowników języka angielskiego na poziomie zaawansowanym.

W rozdziale pierwszym przedstawiono pojęcie fosylizacji w kontekście procesu uczenia się/nauczania języka obcego. Omówiono teorie wyjaśniające charakter opisywanego zjawiska, oraz próby zdefiniowania problemu. Kolejno ukazano zakres występowania oraz symptomy procesu fosylizacji, oraz ich wpływ na jakość kompetencji językowej wyrażanej za pomocą produkcji językowej ustnej i pisemnej.

Rozdział drugi prezentuje wielo-aspektowy charakter fosylizacji na tle rozwoju interjęzyka. Omówiono wpływ zjawiska na przebieg procesu uczenia się/używania języka, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem czynników odpowiedzialnych za jakość w/w procesu.

Rozdział trzeci stanowi opis schematu badań empirycznych mających na celu wyróżnienie i scharakteryzowanie stadiów fosylizacji u uczących się i użytkowników języka angielskiego na poziomie zaawansowanym. Próbę stanowili studenci piątego roku studiów zaocznych Filologii Angielskiej Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach. Badania właściwe przeprowadzono w oparciu o dwa narzędzia badawcze, tj. kwestionariusz osobowy i próbki tekstu ustnego i pisemnego. Szukając odpowiedzi na główne pytanie badawcze dotyczące zakresu i stopnia fosylizacji u uczestników badań wyodrębniono wyznaczniki fosylizacji odpowiadające symptomom sfosylizowanego języka pisemnego i mówionego. Badania miały charakter diagnozy podłużnej, na którą składały się trzy pomiary poziomu kompetencji językowej studentów na przestrzeni jednego roku (październik 2005 – październik 2006).

W rozdziale czwartym dokonano analizy informacji uzyskanych za pomocą kwestionariusza osobowego. Pozwolił on zebrać wiadomości wstępne dotyczące wieku, płci, wykształcenia itp., grupy badanych oraz informacje na temat doświadczeń językowych próby z perspektywy studenta i nauczyciela. Głównym

zadaniem respondentów była ocena postępów w nauce języka angielskiego, poszczególnych umiejętności, jak również ewaluacja sukcesów i porażek w procesie uczenia się i nauczania języka. Kwestionariusz sprawdził wiedzę badanych na temat fosylizacji języka, symptomów oraz okoliczności sprzyjających jej rozwojowi, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem objawów fosylizacji u w/w grupy.

Jak się okazało, większość badanych jest zadowolona z postępów i osiągnięć językowych, które odnoszą głównie w zakresie gramatyki języka angielskiego oraz w ćwiczeniach rozumienia tekstu mówionego i pisanego. Zdarzają się też porażki językowe, a te związane są z wymową i użyciem słownictwa. Choć badani wydają się być świadomi procesu fosylizacji, nie dopuszczają do siebie myśli, że ten właśnie problem może ich dotyczyć i wymieniają nieznaczne przykłady fosylizacji, jakie zaobserwowali.

W rozdziale piątym przedstawiono wyniki trzech pomiarów badań mających na celu sprawdzić poziom kompetencji językowej grupy badanych. Omówiono jakość zarejestrowanych wypowiedzi ustnych i pisemnych, które miały charakter komentarzy studentów w stosunku do wylosowanych przez siebie przysłów i cytatów znanych osób, a następnie porównano wyniki pochodzące z obu typów prowadzonego dyskursu.

W rezultacie dokonano klasyfikacji symptomów fosylizacji z podziałem na ustne i pisemne. W przypadku wypowiedzi ustnych kryterium oceny języka stanowiły poprawność i płynność językowa. Pod względem poprawności językowej stwierdzono naruszenie reguł gramatycznych, leksykalnych, morfologicznych i fonologicznych języka docelowego przez próbę. Z kolei w przypadku płynności językowej odnotowano liczne oznaki braku płynności jak np. pauzy wypełnione i puste, powtórzenia, fałszywe „starty” czy nieskończone i nic nieznaczące zdania. Jeśli chodzi o wypowiedzi pisemne, kryterium poprawności językowej nie uległo zmianie, a płynność zastąpiono spójnością tekstu. Niepoprawne formy językowe zaobserwowano w gramatyce, słownictwie, morfologii, ortografii i interpunkcji języka angielskiego, a niespójność wypowiedzi została spowodowana nadużyciem utartych zwrotów językowych.

W oparciu o rozwój fosylizacji, o którym przesądziły wyniki pomiaru pierwszego i trzeciego wyróżniono trzy stadia fosylizacji języka, które zostały przedstawione w rozdziale szóstym. Stadia fosylizacji odpowiadały trzem pomiarom w czasie. Cechą charakterystyczną każdego ze stadium okazały się objawy

fosylizacji – ich zakres oraz częstotliwość występowania zarówno w języku mówionym jak i pisanym. Cechą wspólną poszczególnych stadiów były również poprawne i niepoprawne formy językowe, które potwierdziły istniejący w literaturze przedmiotu podział na fosylizację błędnych i bezbłędnych form językowych (ang. *erroneous* i *non-erroneous fossilization*). Proporcje liczbowe pokazały przewagę form poprawnych nad niepoprawnymi w języku mówionym i pisanym, a tendencje zaobserwowane na przestrzeni trzech pomiarów wskazują na wzrost błędnych form językowych porównując stadium 1 i 2, a następnie nieznaczny spadek w użyciu niewłaściwych form języka spowodowany zwiększoną ilością poprawnych zwrotów językowych w przypadku wypowiedzi ustnych. Biorąc pod uwagę teksty pisemne, zanotowano tendencję rosnącą wśród niepoprawnych wypowiedzi w zestawieniu trzech stadiów. Liczba poprawnych form językowych maleje w stadium 3, spowodowana wcześniej wspomnianym wzrostem niepoprawności językowych.

W rozdziale siódmym dokonano porównania tzw. sfosylizowanej kompetencji językowej (ang. *fossilised competence*) badanych studentów z subiektywną oceną znajomości języka, jaką wystawili sobie respondenci w kwestionariuszu. Podjęto próbę wyjaśnienia tych nieścisłości, sugerując przede wszystkim wpływ wysokiej samooceny oraz pewności siebie u większości studentów i zaproponowano sposób pozwalający przybliżyć uczącym się i użytkownikom języka obcego faktyczny poziom ich kompetencji, a tym samym zakres fosylizacji języka. Ankieta, której przeprowadzenie zasugerowano pozwoli dokładnie przeanalizować język pod kątem poprawności, płynności i spójności wypowiedzi, a rozwiązywana wielokrotnie i w różnych odstępach czasu uświadomi respondentom zmiany językowe, które są nieodzowną częścią procesu uczenia się/nauczania języka.

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